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Paul Alexander Morawetz
(1914-2001)

Members will be saddened to learn of the death in Melbourne on 26 April of Paul Morawetz. Paul was an important patron of the Association, especially in its formative years, when our membership was small and most of us were junior academics with young family responsibilities. Many a time, Paul’s generosity enabled us to offset a significant proportion of those early annual conferences and offer subsidies to students.

Born and raised in Czechoslovakia, Paul fled to Australia in 1940 from Bangkok, where he had been Far East manager of the Skoda car, steel and munitions complex. A brilliant linguist, he served as a volunteer for the Department of Information’s Listening Service, monitoring enemy broadcasts, until a secret ASIO report branded him a spy and a communist. He served as the first secretary and often-controversial spokesman of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, assisting Jewish Holocaust survivors.

Like many Eastern European migrants to Australia, Paul had an international perspective. However it was only after he retired from business in 1959, a wealthy man at only 45, that he became involved in Africa. His work on behalf of refugees and Israel brought him to the attention of the then relatively small cohort of international bureaucrats at the United Nations, World Bank and IMF. In 1961, Paul was appointed as World Bank adviser in Kenya, the first of a succession of appointments. He served with the UN in Tanganyika in 1962, and on the Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa. He later led a UN mission to West Africa to investigate the establishment of a common market.

Shortly after the foundation meeting of what became AFSAAP, a phone call came out of the blue. Paul had heard about our efforts and offered to provide seed-funding. His wife had moved to Israel by this stage and Paul was always on the move. Only rarely was he in Australia for the annual AFSAAP conferences, but for years his cheque would arrive, in fond memory of his days in Africa, wishing us well and hoping that Africa would see better times. In recognition of his support, he was made an AFSAAP Life-Member in 1984.
A lovable, eclectic, outlandish, often politically incorrect cigar-smoking ball of energy, Paul liked to reminisce on his days in East Africa and Ethiopia. A social reformer and humanitarian with conservative economic outlook, he was a complex man of strongly held opinions. I recall on one occasion our rather different views on the merits of President Tombalbaye of Chad, to whom he served as economic adviser in the mid-1960s. While decry you as an idiot in the heat of an argument, Paul was nevertheless without malice. A man who endeared himself to all who knew him.

Those who knew him will be saddened by his death and grateful for his acquaintance.

David Dorward
LaTrobe University

Susan Geiger

Scholar and activist Susan Geiger passed away on April 14th after a 16 month long battle with leukemia. Professor Geiger taught at the University of Minnesota from 1976 to 1999 in the Department of Women’s Studies, the Centre for Advanced Feminist Studies, the Department of Afro-American and African Studies, the History Department, and the MacArthur Program. She played a central role in building each of these programs, as well as many communities of feminist and international studies scholars. She had a profound influence on both her students and peers.

Susan Geiger led a diverse and interesting life. She led groups of students in study-abroad programs in East Africa and participated in exchange programs with the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, where she received her PhD in History in 1973. She also had an ongoing relationship with the Tanzanian Gender Networking Programme (TGNP). Susan was a visiting scholar in women’s studies at the University of New Mexico, the University of Arizona, and Flinders University.

Her research interests included: 1) Political and social history of African women, with primary focus on development and expression of political consciousness among Tanzanian women, using oral and life history documentation; 2) Analytical importance of gender in all aspects of historical analysis, including studies of “the state,” nationalism, economic policy, etc; 3) Methodological and theoretical issues around the collection and use of life histories as data in historical research; 4) International feminist theory; race/gender in international perspective.

Professor Geiger published widely throughout her career. Her book, TANU Women: Gender and Culture in the Making of Tanganyikan Nationalism, 1955-1965, is a major contribution to modern African historical studies. Published in 1997, it has been called “path breaking” and “unique.” As a new interpretation of nationalist history in Tanganyika/Tanzania, her work forces a reevaluation of women’s roles in the construction, creation, and meaning of nationalism. But beyond that, the words of African women, especially Bibi Titi Mohammed, stand at the centre of the book, reflecting Susan’s abiding commitment to placing gender and women at the centre of her historical work, not just theoretically, but in the very practice of it.

In addition to this major work, Professor Geiger published numerous articles about women and African nationalism, life history method, and women and economic development in Tanzania. She was also Associate Editor for SIGNS: Journal of Women in Culture and Society.

Susan was a committed teacher and generous mentor, a lifelong activist, a rigorous scholar and meticulous critic, and a tireless institution builder. Although her influence will continue to be felt for generations to come, her presence is already sorely missed.

Susie Bullington
University of Minnesota
Note from the Editor

I very much regret another delay in publication, this time of the June 2001 issue of the AFSAAP Review. While the circumstances responsible for the delay were again quite beyond my control I must nonetheless apologise to contributors and readers.

We continue, despite the delay, with the Review’s transition from the original newsletter of 1978 to a more substantial journal of Africa and African affairs as foreshadowed in my last Editor’s report and discussed at the 2000 AGM (See R&N June 2000). First, as you will see we now have a new title for this journal. Second the formalisation of a process of peer review of scholarly articles in the journal is complete and I must thank those who have agreed to be part of the Editorial Advisory Board now in place, not least the overseas members. No significant change in the existing flexible and inclusive editorial policy is proposed. We remain concerned to publish both scholarly and generalist articles and other material that contributes to a better understanding of the historical context and the complexities of contemporary Africa. What we ask, as before, is that contributors write in a form that makes their work readily available to as broad an audience as possible, both within and beyond the academic community. (See in this issue, on this question, Graham Connah’s question to his fellow archaeologists, “who writes for whom?”)

AFSAAP has taken this step forward as an Association fully aware of the difficulties that face Africanists in Australia today. Although individual disciplinary strengths, with the exception of literature and literary studies, have been eroded over the last decade, there is still nonetheless a significant core scholarly community engaged with Africa, as well as a much larger public constituency for whom access to critical material on Africa and African affairs is a major concern. We are all the more encouraged moreover by the increased interest and support of colleagues overseas; and look forward to an increasing number of contributions from this international community with which all of us interact in different ways. We hope that this augurs well for the further development of The Australasian Review of African Studies.

I finally thank contributors to this (first) issue of the “new” journal. I am delighted to include as our guest essay Thandika Mkandawire’s keynote address given at the AFSAAP conference in Perth in November 1999. That conference took as its theme “New Perspectives on African Studies” and Mkandawire’s core argument was that we need to reexamine the widespread negative evaluation of the African nation-state. While not everyone would agree with him his conclusions about nationalism are echoed, indirectly, in David Brown’s thoughtful evaluation of Kwame Nkrumah’s manipulation of Ghana chieftaincy through the 1950s and 1960s; and in addition the importance of an historical perspective resonates through much else in this issue. I draw your attention to the swag of reviews of new studies on colonial Ghana; to Michael Humphrey’s discussion of spirit possession; and to Roger Woods’ provocative and poignant question, “When will we ever learn?” (see his review of Terence Ranger and colleagues’ study of Matabele over the past hundred years.) The two articles by Scott MacWilliam and Heather Paul which bring us back to contemporary development issues give even more point to that question.

Cherry Gertzel
Editor
AFSAAP 2001:

Into the 21st Century: Africa and Australasia

The 24th Annual Conference of the African Studies Association of Australia and the Pacific (AFSAAP) will this year be held in Melbourne at the La Trobe University’s city campus from October 4th to 6th. The Conference organiser is Dr David Dorward, Director of the African Research Institute at La Trobe University. The conference is being held this year at a time when the forthcoming CHOGM meeting to be held in Brisbane from 6th to 9th of October will generate a considerable public interest in Africa as well as in other Commonwealth countries. There will be a considerable African presence in Melbourne itself at the time, with many African functionaries attending the Commonwealth Business Forum and other pre-CHOGM activities in Melbourne; a good environment in which to hold the conference. Conference preparations are well under way. A welcome number of papers have already been offered with topics that range from literature and theatre to HIV/AIDS; and from public policy issues to politics and economics. Including a good number from Southern Africa.

If you wish to present a paper but have not yet sent in your title and an abstract, please do so now and **no later than September 15th**. Papers are still welcome in any area of African studies.

**The Postgraduate Workshop:**

Wednesday October 3rd, La Trobe City Campus

**Registration:**

Thursday 4 October – 9am

**Conference Dinner:**

Friday 5 October

The annual conference is AFSAAP’s main event of the year, an occasion when we come together, meet old and make new friends, discuss our research, and learn more about Africa so we look forward to seeing you in Melbourne.

For information about accommodation etc see the AFSAAP website:


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**Guest Essay**

African Intellectuals and Nationalism in the Changing Global Context

Thandika Mkandawire*

I took this topic for my keynote address in order to use the sad occasion of the death of the late Julius Nyerere, that decent African nationalist, to reflect on the turbulent link between African nationalism and African intellectuals and the academic community. Nyerere was one of the few African nationalists who straddled the two worlds of thought and action, not only by providing leadership to a nationalist movement but also by articulating both its ideologies and visions. The other leaders in the same category would be Leopold Senghor and Kwame Nkrumah. Some years ago it struck me that all three generations of post-colonial intellectuals had grown up under the shadow of these nationalists — and it is in many ways their *problematique*, using nationalism as defined by Ernest Gellner as “primarily the principle which holds that the polity and national unit should hold together,” that has set our agenda over all these years. Because of the failure of the nationalist developmental project and its mystification, there is now however a whole literature deconstructing and demystifying the nationalist struggles. We now live in a global context. Nevertheless in my view the reformist impulses of the nationalist agenda, revamped to reflect the changed times, constitute a useful point of departure for Africa, in dealing with this changed global context. So one can take the lecture as a plea for a new area of study.

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*Thandika Mkandawire is Director, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, in Geneva, He was Keynote Speaker at the AFSAAP 22nd Annual and International Conference held in Perth, WA, November 26-28th 1999. This essay is a (slightly) reduced version of his keynote address given to that conference.


2 One should point out that although the new critics seem to act as if they are really on to something new, the exposure of nationalists as the new emperors without clothes is not, of course, new. Our writers had by the 1960s already embarked on the denunciation job. See Achebe’s *The Man of the People*, or Ayi Kwei Armah’s *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born.*
The Protagonists: The Nationalists and the Intellectuals

The two protagonists of my narrative are the nationalists and the intellectuals. First, the nationalists and their problematic nature. Over the years, the nationalist movements have conveniently forgotten their origins as “national histories” were concocted so that in the beginning there was always the movement for “national independence.” Many of the key nationalist leaders were thrown out of office, killed or sent into exile, sometimes by colleagues in the nationalist struggle. The main of nationalism has been worn by such a tantalising range of dictators that it is difficult to imagine it ever had popular support. In more recent years it has taken the enormous integrity and courage of a Nelson Mandela and the death of a Julius Nyerere to remind us of what African nationalism was all about.

In the new historical studies, emphasis is placed on various groups or social movements actively engaged in the nationalist struggle and their different responses to the colonial situation. From recognition of their differences (ethnic, age, gender, class, and religious) a quantum leap is made to the conclusion that nationalism, as an essentialist and totalising ideology, rede roughuted over all these putatively more democratically anchored movements to account for the authoritarian turn of post-colonial rule. The Nyereres appear as usurpers of struggles that belonged to others. In more empiricist and mechanical versions, the nationalists are read off from the matrix of layers of civil society generated from colonial rule in a suspiciously precise manner. There are those who are educated and operate on the national scale corresponding to the reach of the colonial state. Peter Gibbons for instance divided the petty bourgeoisie into those that operate nationally and those that operate locally. The nationalist movements derive their leadership from the former, while the various local social movements derive theirs from the latter. It is often forgotten that many nationalists straddled these movements. Some rose to prominence from them and maintained their close ties to the very end. The adhesion of these individuals to nationalism was not as coerced or accidental as is sometimes suggested. In many cases the logical outcome of their own confrontation with the colonial system forced them to address the question of national independence. In much of this writing, these other social projects are never problematised in the context of the colonial struggle. Indeed, the account often suggests an alternative liberation struggle that could have been achieved with the various social projects intact. It is this position that the nationalists challenged. What if, for example, every ancient empire were to reclaim its past dominance?

This analysis always ignored the fact that the urban-based nationalist movements were not born as fully blown united fronts. They were the creations of excruciatingly slow processes of learning and self-organisation, sometimes lasting decades. Most of these movements claimed to draw lessons from past attempts to overthrow colonial rule; one such lesson being that it was necessary to have as broad an agenda as possible and to eschew what they considered “parochial” interests. In addition were two other imperatives of such broad fronts. The first was people’s understanding, post-World War, that decolonisation would involve general elections and — since the nationalists had championed "One Man One Vote" —the peasant vote would be decisive. In those countries where decolonisation necessitated armed struggle, the need to bring the peasantry into nationalist movements was obvious. In addition, the colonials claimed that they were prolonging colonial rule because the natives were divided; handing independence to such divided societies would be tantamount to criminal dereliction of duty. The nationalists therefore had to demonstrate that they were united.

This literature also ignores the fact that if the nationalist party in power had an immediate enemy on the morrow of independence, it was not some local progressive, trans-territorial or reactionary movement but the rival national party which consisted of people who, in Malawi nationalist Dunduzu Chisiza’s words, “may have fought for independence just as valiantly as anyone else;” and who in most cases the ruling party may have resoundingly defeated in the last only free colonial election. The point here is that the “one-party” state often was not aimed at social movements with different spatial locus but rather at other, equally “national”, parties.

One school has argued that nationalism was merely camouflage used by the emergent urban interests who, in pursuit of future rents, rose against the colonials whom they considered were blocking their access to such rents. Initially advanced within the rational choice view, such a perspective was simply not tenable; because the groups that were to benefit from the policies pursued by the nationalists simply did not exist in any significant numbers at the time of independence and were largely spawned by the process of post-colonial industrialisation. In light of this critique a new position is that the nationalists were fallen angels initially decent but later corrupted by power.

The unkindest cut has come from those who argue that nationalism merely “deracialised” apartheid or “indirect rule.” From this perspective the nationalist project simply disappears — and if it shows up, it is a brief interlude in a process of continued apartheid which, while shedding its colours, remains even after the nationalists have assumed power. Deprived of nationalist  

context, independence remains an enigma. Of course, deracialising anything in Africa would have been an important step in itself but African nationalism sought more than that. A central pillar of colonial rule in general and apartheid in particular was social exclusion of the majority by law and force. Nationalism’s main problem was precisely the opposite. Its quest for a “national consciousness” and inclusion bordered on obsession, tending to see any assertion of difference as divisive and treasonable. This integrative project, rather than exclusionary “deracialisation” of apartheid, and the quest for inclusion, accounts for the populist policies that were to contribute to the fiscal crisis of the 1980s and the blindness of the nationalists to difference. Nationalists stretched the inherited apparatus of the state to the extreme in order to cater for a much broader constituency than colonial and apartheid rule could ever have envisaged. It is difficult to understand much of the behaviour of post-colonial states without understanding this break.

Now, a word about intellectuals. One problem of writing about African intellectuals is that we still lack what Jean Copans calls a “sociology of African intellectuals.” This absence does not, however, logically lead to his conclusion that there is no *Homo Academicus Africanaus*. The “silence” of the 1980s — both imposed and self-imposed — may have fortuitously created, not only of invisibility but also of non-existence. African intellectuals exist and have become much more self-conscious of their condition and with the new wave of democratisation are becoming more visible. In sociological terms African intellectuals have, at least until quite recently, largely been of peasant and working class origin, which partly explains their visceral “populism.” Another increasingly prominent characteristic of African intellectuals is their diasporic position, so that consequently a significant proportion of African intellectual contributions emanates from outside the continent.

The relationship between nationalism and intellectuals or intelligentsia, has been widely debated. More specifically, there has been interest in explaining intellectuals’ fascination with or adhesion to nationalism. Some writers have attributed it to self-interest by intellectuals whose path to material or professional ascendancy was blocked by the coloniser. National liberation is thus seen as a way to positions of power. Other less cynical interpretations attribute it to the skills of intellectuals to articulate in some coherent form the aspirations of their countrymen and women. Still others attribute to the intellectuals a fascination with a fad — nationalism being one of the products of modernisation. All this may be true, but it seems to me that to the extent that most colonised peoples seek decolonisation it would have been strange if intellectuals did not share this aspiration. There is a strong moral case against colonisation. There is, after all, moral agency in many intellectual endeavours.

The problematic nature of African nationalism was illustrated by the confusion in a number of the Western media’s obituaries of Julius Nyerere which could not reconcile the enormous popularity and reverence he enjoyed across the continent and the media’s assertion that Nyerere had left his country in “ruins.” This confusion stems largely from a very narrow, economistic understanding of the tasks of African nationalism against which it has to be judged. What were the problems raised by the most thoughtful of these men and how have they addressed them as social scientists? From the many self- allotted “historical tasks” of African nationalism five would stand out as most widely accepted at the time: complete decolonisation of the continent and national sovereignty, nation-building, economic and social development, democratisation and regional co-operation; if you like, the key constituent elements of the “nation-state project” of African nationalism, a much abused and now badly tarnished ideology. Nationalists are best held to account not against some imported vision but against their own.

**Sovereignty and Nationbuilding**

To understand the case of the nationalist one has to understand that the central premise of most nationalists, even when they lacked a “state project”, was that the struggle for independence and nationbuilding would take place within the confines of the territorial space drawn up by colonialists. “Pan-Africanism” to which the African nationalists usually adhered, dictated that something be said about the eventual integration of the independent state with other independent African states—but that this could wait. What nationalists sought instead was an aggregation of the various manifestations of anti-colonialism for the liberation of that particular space — united and indivisible. Basil Davidson has argued that this was the fatal flaw of African nationalism. “The Black Man’s Burden,” in his words, was the acceptance and the promising of subsequent nationbuilding and future African integration on these colonial borders. The assumption here is that there were some “natural borders” around which new states would be created or over which the edifice of pan-Africanism would be built. The problem is not however so much that the OAU accepted existing colonial borders. Rather it is that it gave individual states carte blanche as to what they could do to their citizens within those borders. An Idris Amin could go on a murderous rampage in his own country and still chair OAU. Julius Nyerere was among the first African leaders to challenge the thesis that the respect for colonial borders sanctioned complete non-intervention in other African countries’ affairs. And a false move by Idris Amin to provide him with the perfect excuse for intervening in Uganda.

Anyway, having accepted the colonial borders, they had to deal with the concrete fact of “nations” consisting of many ethnic groups and nationalities.
The nationalist movement saw recognition of Africa’s social pluralism as succumbing to the “divide and rule” tactics of the colonialists and neo-colonialist forces that were bent on denying African independence; or, wherever they accepted it, on emptying it of any meaning by nursing the fissiparous potential that social pluralism always harboured. And so nationalism saw itself as up in arms against imperialism and the retrograde forces of tribalism. In the process something else happened: in combating “tribalism”, nationalism denied ethnic identity and considered any political—or worse—economic claims based on those identities as diabolic as imperialism, if not worse. And the nationalists’ conflation of tribalism and identity can be excused in many ways. The shock of Katanga in which Africa’s worst enemies—imperialism and racism—championed tribalism against the central government was to affect African nationalism’s perception of ethnicity and regional claims so profoundly that “Tshombe” and “Katanga” were seen behind every movement challenging the authority of the central government.

In some countries radicalisation of the nationalists through armed struggles was to banish ethnicity even further from any serious political consideration. In those states where “Marxism” became the leading ideology, class analysis simply rode roughshod over any other social cleavages. Ethnic identities were “invented” by the colonialist or the petty bourgeoisie. They were part of “false consciousness”. This may have been the case—but “false consciousness”, while subjective in its origins, assumes an objective historical presence that can only be dismissed at one’s peril. The situation was worse in Lusophone Africa, where creolised leadership firmly anchored in Portuguese culture and denied of any indigenous identity simply denied the latter to others—a denial that has partly contributed to the terrible tragedies of Mozambique and Angola, especially when exploited by apartheid South Africa.

Part of the nationalist nervousness about ethnic pluralism stems from a failure to appreciate the enormous success of African nationalism in making “nations” out of, at times, a tantalising mosaic of ethnic groups and cultures. The nationalist movement had been able to knead together the differentiated grievances of various groups into a demand for national independence. Most Senegaleses, Zambians, Kenyans, Malawians, see themselves as such. And whatever conflicts they find themselves in are over power or resources within the national entity within which they live as nationals. Thus arguments for authoritarian or centralised power based on the fear of the fissiparous pressures of ethnicity do not hold water today, if they ever did in the past. Africa is quintessentially a continent of multi-ethnic societies. And this fact is not about to be changed by the magic wands of modernisation or nationalism. And why should it change? Most Africans are quite comfortable with the fact of belonging to a national entity and assuming their ethnic identity as testified to by their polyglot skills and, contrary to rumour, the weakness or absence of secessionist movements based on “tribalism”.

African intellectuals were quite confused about this. While acknowledging the pluralism of their respective countries, carved as they were out of “artificial” boundaries, they avoided confronting this diversity squarely; largely due to fear that recognition of ethnic division would be miscued by those bent on sowing division. Some were prevented from giving prominence to ethnic identities by the theoretical categories within which they operated. One of the problems internal to academia was the fact that the discipline that was focused on ethnic issues was anthropology which had served as a handmaiden of colonialism. It is perhaps not surprising that one of the most cited articles on the question was the essay by Archie Mafeje (himself an anthropologist.) However, I believe that in most cases the persuasive argument against discussing ethnicity was state repression. Ethnicity, corruption, militarism—the scourges of post-colonial Africa—were simply taboo in African countries. It is no wonder that with growing political openness in Africa studies on these issues have flourished. This said, African scholars were early in pointing out that while denying the salience of social pluralism and the ubiquity of ethnic identity, the nationalists in power engaged in the politics of “regional balance,” the schizophrenic politics that prided itself on ensuring that all ethnic groups were somehow officially recognised, but denied intellectuals the space to study ethnicity.

Complicating matters for African intellectuals was the fact that the cultural correlate to African nationalism was not “national” cultures or ethnic identities but pan-African ones: Negritude, African personality, conscienism, etc. In articulating these ideologies they constantly run into the danger of being accused of being racist essentialists, a charge that Kwame Appiah has tirelessly articulated. Those of a Foucaultian penchant for strewing power everywhere ended up blaming the victim for trying to express an intensely

5 Problems of “creolised” urban movements are not peculiar to Lusophone Africa. “Creolised” urban movements in Liberia & Sierra Leone have had serious problems with nationalism and with “indigenous” cultures.

6 There is an interesting “sociology of knowledge” about the writing on the nationalist movements. Most writers on it were non-Africans (mostly of neo-Marxist persuasion, for whom nationalism was petty bourgeoisie). Ex-patriots of right-wing persuasion saw nationalism as merely the great scape-goating ideology. Among Africans the main participants in these debates were racial-ethnic minorities or refugee scholars (like the author) both of whom usually sat uneasily with local nationalism which was most likely for one reason or another to exclude them.

lived social and political fact. Today the problem seems most acute in South Africa, where the question of “Africanity” seems to be a major concern — especially among the non-Black scholarly community. African nationalism always contained some notion of cultural reaffirmation and the liberation of a race. This may never have been adequately theorised although there can be no doubt that the Nkrumahs, Senghor, Cheikh Anta Diops did try in their own way. Anyway, the point is, as the late Sam Nolutshungu pointed out, how to separate racial identity and the racial claims it entails from the “cultural and context-defining meanings of Africanness; from the merely racial, so as to make that identity extensible and inclusive”.

And so pluralism remains not only “a fact waiting for some institutions”, as Kwame Anthony Appiah observes, but also a reality awaiting theorisation. Our failure to deal with ethnicity remains one of the most inexplicable cases of intellectual lapses in Africa. I am not suggesting here that we were totally oblivious of it. Rather I am suggesting that our tendency to downplay its salience has denied us the opportunity of taking seriously. Interestingly, there is today a new wave of fascination with “identities”, ethnic diversities and various forms of localisms.

The discreet charm of African nationalism was its vagueness on the nature of its national base and its adhesion to a more open-ended pan-Africanism which did not allow for crossing each other’s borders. We should also note therefore how the “post-nationalist” leaders have tended to define the nation either in more exclusivist or in adversarial terms. In the former case, the insistence is on more precise definitions of who are nationals, as in the case of Côte d’Ivoire’s President Conant Bedia’s insistence on “Ivoirianité” or Zambia’s Chiluba’s on a genealogical definition of a Zambian. The latter shows up in dreams of territorial extension or the redefinition of colonial borders that has been breached by some Tutsi intellectuals. Lessons from so-called “failed states” of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Somalia are important reminders that the “nationbuilding” project was and is still a vital one for Africa and that it is, therefore, something on which African scholarship must still expend resources.

9 This is a complaint that Kwezi Prah 1998, Beyond the Colour Line has raised against Appiah’s reduction of pan-African ideology into basically racial essentialism.
12 There is considerable amount of work by African scholars on ethnicity. Institutions such as CODESRIA have taken up the issue quite seriously, organising research networks and special “institutes” on ethnicity.

Economic Development

A second key element in the nationalist project and in a sense a corollary to the “nationbuilding” agenda was “economic development.” One argument against “development” was that it was externally imposed. This interpretation is, to say the least, misinformed and quite frankly insulting to the many African leaders and intellectuals who have sought material progress for their societies. The link between our being dominated and techno-economic backwardness did not escape the nationalists. One did not need to have the idea of “catching up” imposed from outside. “Guise” and “steel” had been decisive in our subjugation and “guns” and “steel” we had to have. Much of the current “anti-developmental” discourse is tantamount to a call for unilateral disarmament, and as such it remains suspect. It is quite clear from nationalist historiography that development — the eradication of the “unholy trinity of ignorance, poverty and disease” was a central component of the nationalist agenda. Indeed, one of the major indictments of colonialism was its failure to avail the colonies of access to the knowledge and other means that were available for dealing with these issues. It may be true that “development” was to be eventually side-tracked from its central objectives or to be captured to fulfill neo-colonial objectives. It may also be true that internal development and external impositions may have led to undesirable “development models.” In this case one can talk of “imposed” or “failed” models. But the objective of “development” in the broad sense of structural change, equity and growth was popular and internally anchored. In any case, the association between nationalism and development, often understood as involving industrialisation, has been so close that Ernest Gellner suggested that the two were virtually inseparable.

The quest for development, for the eradication of the unholy trinity against which the nationalists were drawn, was widely shared in African intellectual circles. One has only to look at the publications of CODESRIA to see this. The name of the flagship of CODESRIA is Africa Development, and for years every research programme had “development” attached to it. “Technology and Development,” “Education and Development,” “Women and Development”, etc. However, by the 1980s a reaction began to emerge. African intellectuals began to critique “developmentalism” — not because material progress was undesirable but because as an ideology it absolutized economic growth to the exclusion of other values — culture, human rights. At the 1986 CODESRIA
General Assembly, a decision was taken to drop "development," again not because it had ceased to matter but because it tended to overshadow other growing concerns of the African intellectual community — human rights, cultural autonomy, gender equality, national cohesion etc; because it negated or marginalised other values by posing itself as the ultimate end of all African endeavours and not as a means to some high goals; and because of the totalising and repressive hold it had on politics and its use by both donors and national governments to justify whatever they were doing. It was an objection to the sign "Silence: development in progress" that African leaders sought to hang at the door to our nations and societies. More specifically in the African context we were responding to the terrible uses to which the notion had been put: to suppress human rights, to compel people into social arrangements that were not desirable, to ride roughshod on people's identities and cultures, etc. But development in the sense of addressing the material needs of society was squarely on our agenda. Indeed, the urgency for defending "development" was to be highlighted by the "adjustment" ideology, which reduced economic policy to debt repayment and satisfaction of an ideologically driven reaffirmation of the market; and relegated issues of economic development, democracy and equity to perfunctory rhetoric.

This said, there were, of course, differences in interpretation. Few African scholars shared the "modernisation" approach to development. Most were attracted to the view that (a) development was not a linear process; nations could achieve growth via paths other than those traversed by the developed countries; and (b) the world system was not neutral or benign with respect to development. To confront a world system that was seen as hostile to development, "delinking" or "collective self-reliance" were proposed. There were also considerable controversies as to what social class or institutions would be most appropriate under the circumstances. In general many African intellectuals doubted the African political class had the "political will" to seriously pursue the development of their respective countries. The corruption and self-aggrandisement of the leaders merely lent more support to these doubts.

There are a number of ways of reacting to the failure to "develop," or to the "impasse", as it has been dubbed\(^5\). One response is to question the validity of the objective itself and to say that we never wanted "development" anyway, that it was a Eurocentric, external imposition. This questioning of development has largely been posed by intellectuals or activists from outside Africa and from Africa's own diaspora. In most cases this has involved well-meaning paternalism, which invariably fails to take African agency seriously in the development saga, or is a reflection of the ignorance as to how "development" entered our respective national agendas.

The critiques of African intellectuals have focused on examining what went wrong in achieving what they generally view as desirable.\(^6\) The argument is basically one of "Bringing Development Back In", but this time with a democratic face and cultural soul. Considerable energy has been expended on criticising structural adjustment programmes, largely for their anti-development bias. There are also new critiques of development in African circles. Postmodernism has reached Africa largely via African scholars in the diaspora and South African scholars. Francophone African scholars are playing a leading role here partly because economics has rarely dominated the discourse on development there, as it has in Anglophone intellectual circles. Some elements of the ecologist critique have also entered African discourse to question the reproducibility of the Western model especially with respect to environmental sustainability; without however much resonance in African intellectual circles in which concerns with intra-temporal distribution issues (North-South issues) overwhelmingly exceed the inter-temporal, intergenerational concerns that dominate Western discourse on the environment.

Well-taken though some of the forewarnings of the dangers of prosperity and consumerism are, and of the "Faustian Bargain" that development entails, they


\(^6\) They have done so by looking for both internal and external reasons. Contrary to the caricature, the African discourse has never been exclusively externalist in its critique. African writers began complaining about problems of corruption, waste and mismanagement long before it became fashionable in the donor community to do so.
often wringing as nostalgic requiems to a past and to living conditions that none of these “advocates of post-developmentalistism” would seek to leave. We must remember that for those in the developed countries rejection of material progress and prosperity (most of which is never more than rhetorical) is a matter of choice and discretion. It has more the character of fasting. In Africa it would at best be making virtue out of necessity. Reading some of the recent descriptions of the development debacle, you would be made to believe that the whole thing was a “disgrace” that took place in Northern capitals or aid missions some of which spilled over to African intelligences who drew inspiration and ideas uncritically. In the more solipsistic conditions of all this, the reality of poverty and underdevelopment are occulted so that the validity of debates on development is determined entirely at the level of discourse; with some boldly proclaiming that we, in Africa, have unbeknownst to ourselves entered a post-developmental era where we can engage without the nagging narratives of poverty, ignorance and disease.

One shares Takaki’s concerns that a political economy of development will be sacrificed to “scholarly representations of other scholarly representations of original representations — feasts of intellectual delights detached from the reality of poverty, racism, greed, theft, chicanery and exploitation.” These fears are real and it would be most unfortunate if that dominated thinking in Africa, for it would undermine the strong humanist concerns that have sustained African scholarship all these years. I am, however, comforted by the knowledge that most African social scientists still possess enough sense to see that the poverty of their people in pristine natural conditions is not the answer. Poverty still roams in Africa unchallenged by the vast human knowledge, social skills and experience of its populations. In our forests, savannah and sahel, it is far from an endangered species. Indeed it now occupies a central place in the African social drama, and it is the face of Africa with which much of the world is most familiar.

The Problem of Democratisation
One question that immediately arose after independence was: how does one govern societies in which ethnic identities are strong and tend to glide easily into tribalism? And what state structure is appropriate for “development.” The almost universal response in Africa was one-party rule which in its most idealised form would provide a common forum through which all groups would be heard. This was the one party version articulated by Nyerere and in some sense attempted in Tanzania. It eventually tripped on the inherent contradictions of “one party participatory democracy.” The great source of incoherence arose from the failure to reconcile what were obviously socially pluralistic arrangements in terms of class and ethnicity, with political and economic arrangements that were monolithic and highly centralised.

Some have argued that experiments in democracy have failed because political parties have evolved along tribal lines. While this may have been true it is equally true that the institutional arrangements bequeathed us by our erstwhile colonial masters did not facilitate things. Indeed, they made things devastatingly worse. The ”winner take all” constitutional arrangements led to results that totally denied countries’ social pluralism and easily led to exclusion of large sections of the population. Indeed, the ”regional balance” arrangements practised by the one party regimes seemed more cognisant of the social complexities of African nation-states than the outcomes generated by the constitutional arrangements that we have so mimetically adopted as our own.

One of the promises to which the nationalists paid short shrift was that of democracy. No sooner had they come to power than they found reason to discard the liberal democratic institutions that they had fought for and that had eventually brought them to power. The arguments given ranged from the need for strong government and unity, both “nation-building” and development, to the cultural inappropriateness of Western institutions to African conditions. In most cases African leaders received moral and intellectual support for theories of modernization. In the Cold War days there was always a foreign ally that found the authoritarian régime compatible or even necessary to its geopolitical interests.

For African intellectuals this provided hard choices. Since most of them shared the nationalist objectives and since in some way they were sceptical of the appropriateness of foreign institutions, they were at pains to find the democratic or “popular” kernel in the many variants of “one-party” democracy that resulted. In any case, few found the moral case for intellectual freedom in the context where basic freedoms — freedom to life — were severely constrained. There was, of course, no correlation between the silence of academics and the plenitude of the lives of the poor — not in Africa. But such was the force of nationalism and developmentalism that even the prospect that there might indeed be a trade-off between academic freedom and national welfare counselled caution.”

The abuse of the authority entrusted to them, the obvious positive correlation between authoritarianism and poor economic performance, the denigration of nationalism, the growing political protest and the explosion of conflicts that had hitherto been covered up by repression — all this emboldened African academics to begin to speak out and to insist on both academic freedom and democratization.  

Non-Organic Intellectuals and the Nationalists  
During the struggle for independence, nationalism sought historical and cultural anchors — or a usable past — for its sustenance. And in the early years of independence there was a genuine attempt to find new expressions for what was happening, or expected to be edified, in post-colonial Africa. African intellectuals shared this quest. However, they were soon to discover that the "usable" pasts they had sought to construct for the nationalists could be turned into "abusable pasts" in the hands of a growing self-serving political class. Few African leaders sought to cultivate an indigenous "intellectuariat" that was, in the Gramscian sense, "organic". If our intellectuals in that environment produced "irrelevant" research, this was not because of the simplistic "basic" and "applied" research dichotomy. My own view is that the causes are rather to be found at two other levels. One was the oppositional stance of most African intellectuals and their unwillingness to be "usable" by some of the unsavoury regimes that littered the African continent. One simply did not want to be relevant to a Mobutu or Banda. This would have been as good a case as any for "adverse organicity." Those of a more revolutionary temperament simply did not see any point in advising regimes that were doomed by history or by imminent revolution. In addition, repression bred alienation which, combined with Africans’ visceral popivism, only bred an oppositional stance toward government.

The second and more serious problem was whether our basic research really addressed the key issues and whether, when it borrowed concepts, it was sufficiently sensitive to the specificities of our own conditions. Here I have my doubts. One interesting question is how we read "foreign ideas." The analysis of Africa was dominated by others whose purposes for studying us were driven by their own concerns. We consequently ended up studying ourselves as if we studied the "other" — only that in our case the "other" was ourselves.  

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19 The single most important manifestation was the symposium on Academic Freedom organised by CODESRIA in Kampala in 1990. One important outcome of the conference was the Kampala Declaration on Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility.  
20 V.V. Mudimbe is reported to have run away from Zaire after having refused a seat on the central committee of Mobutu’s ruling party.  
21 It is interesting to compare this with how the Japanese have "read" the West. As an example, among Japanese economists Marx, Schumpeter, List and Keynes were viewed as outstanding theoreticians of change in the West. They read these texts with a decidedly "nationalist" twist.  
23 Op cit p 240.  
24 Thus Claude Ake could speak of "proletarian nations" so as to straddle the Marxist world of class struggle and the nationalist struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism. Claude Ake 1978 Revolutionary Pressures in Africa London, Longman.
because it failed to take each of these struggles seriously on its own terms. It was not enough for Mandela to have fought racial domination; he had also to be seen to be the bearer of the banner of the proletariat. If he failed to do this, he was immediately accused of “betrayal”.

Much has been written on the integrity of African intellectuals and their relationship with the state. John Ilonvbere and Timothy Shaw 25 capture this self-criticism thus:

“...one tradition which has emerged in Nigeria is that there has always been a distinction between scholars’ performances at the university service and when in government. While in the former, the Nigerian intellectuals have been known for their radical politics and relatively forthright, honesty and insistence on accountability and justice. As part of the corporatist strategy, however, the government has increasingly picked on militant and vociferous intellectuals and appointed them to important political positions which is where such qualities previously associated with them evaporate. It is therefore appropriate, in some respects, to place the blame for the crisis of the Nigerian society on a section of the intellectual ‘class’.”

Another criticism has been on how “state centric” African intellectuals have been. Writing on Senegalese intellectuals vis-à-vis the state Aminata Diaw 36 accuses them of continuing to define themselves only in relation to the state. They thus failed to create and manage the instruments of a genuine autonomy that might have ensured a participatory involvement with society commensurate with its stature. The absence of independent publishing or distribution endowed with financial resources from non-governmental sources, and the lack of research outfits with independent financial backing, also contributed to the atomisation of the intelligentsia.

The problem with the relationship with the state however was not so much that of corruption but of an unrequited love for the Prince, who they felt constituted the major instrument for development and nation building. Much of the distance between the African intellectual and the politician was not by their choice. The distinctive position of the African intellectual was in some sense to be “organic;” indeed some were willing to submit their intellectual values to the nationalist project. But African states were apparently never in great need of such a social category. Few African leaders bothered to curry favour with African intellectuals qua intellectuals. To add insult to injury, the “masses” with whom intellectuals believed they identified tended to be indifferent to the fate of intellectuals at the hands of the state. In some cases, such as Algeria, they were outright and murderously hostile 27. The striking image of the African intellectual, then, is his/her marginality, a theme captured in much of African writing 28.

**Nation building Again and the Challenge of Globalisation**

From all accounts one of the major problems that Africa and intellectuals will now have to address is globalisation which has been the greatest challenge to the nationalist project. Globalisation refers to both the actual processes driven by trade, finance and technology and the ideological expressions of such processes. African intellectuals have usually had a healthy dose of scepticism about processes of integration of their countries into the world market, whether in earlier forms of neo-colonialism, transnationalisation or internationalisation or its new guise of globalisation. Quests for “endogenous” or “self-reliance” or “auto-centric” development have been dismissed as either chauvinistic or unrealistic sloganeering, either as implying a complete break with globalisation or a return to some romantic past of “traditional institutions or knowledge”. African scholars have also been accused of being closed in, as their governments have been accused of running “inward-looking” closed economies. Attempts to create autonomous spaces for reflection have been dismissed as insular and provincial, and ultimately doomed to fail due to the ineluctable forces of globalisation. Visiting scholars are wont, like the Gypsies in a Garcia Marquez town, to inform us of new things taking place in the world out there. In order to keep up with the (global) Joneses we are enjoined to take up a much broader array of themes that reflect the cultural flux and interpenetration that globalisation entails — rap music, hair styles, new social movements etc. Broadening our agenda is obviously a welcome thing if it does

25 See especially El Kenz’s account of the “baffling” and brutal realisation by Algerian intellectuals that not only were they not organic to the state but that the “people” who they had considered “friends” had now turned into mortal enemies and on the cultural hegemonic struggles that intellectuals have been drawn in, often violently (Ali el Kenz “Algeria from Development Hope to Identity Violence” in CODESRIA (ed) The State of Academic Freedom in Africa CODESRIA, Dakar 1996).

26 See Felix Mthunzi “Change and the Intelligentsia in African Literature: A Study in Marginality” Africa Development 43(3), pp5-32 1988. Mthunzi concludes his article by noting that the characters to whom the various African writers assign the role of intellectuals “have common traits which have made their role in Africa somewhat marginal”. He then adds “Perhaps this marginality has contributed to Africa’s crisis. Perhaps” (p.31).
not mean losing our sense of priorities and if it does not replicate the
dependence that has haunted African scholarship in the post-colonial era.

While it may be the case that some of this can rightly be given this interpretation, most writing has been a protest against the continued remote control of the development process by forces outside Africa or the occupation of the “driver’s seat” by unlicensed foreigners whose knowledge of the terrain and even sobriety could be guaranteed — of the “dependence” of African economies. It is paradoxical that the “Dependence School” that was influential in African debates was declared dead at precisely the moment when African countries were entering a period of intense tutelage under foreign institutions. It is also remarkable that almost forty years after independence donors now suggest that it might not be a bad idea at all for Africans to “own” policies of the development of their countries.

Because it has been the site of so much suffering and oppression, there are some who see the demise of the African state as good news. They see globalisation as a welcome wind because it will sweep away our local potenates and the restrictive and suffocating order which have imposed on Africa. Globalisation is then seen as ushering in an era of freedom — unlimited access to information and knowledge, multiple identities and infinite range of choices. This may be the ultimate promise of globalisation, and there is a new elite in Africa that has emerged in the wake of liberalisation and privatisation that may already begin to enjoy the fruits of this new order. However, the picture in Africa right now seems to be different. If globalisation is eroding the state it is also unleashing murderous localism that nationalism had so desperately sought to tame. I have argued elsewhere that:

how Africa goes global will be determined not only by the exogenous and putatively ineluctable forces of globalisation, but also by the degree of social cohesion countries can individually and collectively muster. It is this social cohesion that will determine and firm up the internal strategies necessary to make politically viable and legitimate whatever countries choose. Failure to come up with adequate internal responses to the external challenges will merely expose African countries to the process of “imperializing” globalisation.

Both internal institutional and political weaknesses and the particular way Africa is being integrated into the global system are likely to lead to this undesirable outcome. The internal problems are the result on the one hand of internal inconsistencies and conflicts and what Africans themselves generally describe as “betrayal” by the leaders of the promise of independence; and on the other of the reverberations of foreign pressures on domestic politics which may not only alter the preferences or ideologies of key actors but also influence the social composition and strength of political coalitions.

Perhaps the most insidious effect of “global talk” has been at the ideological level where globalisation has been given a twist that has tended to denigrate national ideologies of social change and to underrate social policy. More specifically, the ideology has tended to suggest that notions of equity and social justice are either hopelessly old fashioned and “ideological” or simply doomed to be swept aside by the ineluctable force of globalisation. In this sense globalisation has either provided an excuse for those who would want to set aside the agenda for equity and justice, or has served to demoralize or disarm those who have sought to use national policies to address these issues. Even more significant is that policymakers at the national level are at great pains to conceal whatever egalitarian inclinations they might have had. One has simply ceased talking about equity and poverty as this might scare “markets”. The need to “signal” foreign capital further re-enforces the persuasiveness of this ideological posture. One should also add here the ideological shifts within the new leadership, which is putatively better attuned to “global talk” and thus much less encumbered by the populism that haunted its predecessors. Keen to gain an international reputation, they are much less inclined to appeal to their own people or listen to local intellectuals.

In recent years both nationalism and its main projects have fallen on hard times — betrayed by some of its heroes, undercut by international institutions and forces of globalisation, reviled and caricatured by academics and alien to a whole new generation of Africans born after independence. We must also remember therefore that, in defiance of the death foretold, nationalism in Africa and elsewhere is alive, and in the eyes of some incongruously and regretfully so. Some of the metamorphoses it has undergone make it very far removed from the original version that people like Nyerere represented. It is nevertheless by revisiting issues of of nation-building, pan-Africanism, development and democracy that we will be able to address the main issues that devastate the lives of so many of us — poverty, wars, repression. Obviously the premises and reasons for revisiting those issues need not be the same as those of the “founding fathers.”

African intellectuals are today much freer than they ever been since independence. The sullen silence of the 1980s was broken by the emergence of

the movement for democratisation. It also marked a growing self-consciousness of the intellectuals as a social group, with rights and responsibilities. Academics themselves had been quick to clamour for academic freedom. Once again, we see African intellectuals adapting a self-consciously public position on national issues. But they work under incredible conditions. They are probably much less "organic" to the current project of re-integrating African economies through structural adjustment, dependent as it is, on global technocrats. African intellectuals have emerged from the debacle of authoritarian rule much less tarnished by involvement with the oppressor than say the Japanese intellectuals were with the fascist regime. They thus have the opportunity of moving away from a focus on the state to engage other social actors that have been unleashed by both the political and economic liberalisation. In a sense our "irrelevance" saved our skins since we emerged from the debacle of the 1980s with our hands relatively clean; a fact demonstrated by the role given to intellectuals in national conventions and other democratic happenings of the 1990s.

However, there is a danger that one ought to avoid this time around. If an earlier generation of African scholars was stifled by the revolutionary oppositional gaze that refused to propose what was to be done before everything had been done, the new generation of African intellectuals run the risk of operating under the paralysing gaze of "post-colonial" pessimism which suggests that, everything being contingent, there are no more grounds for action.

It is obvious to me that the litmus test of any international order remains whether it facilitates economic development in Africa. I also believe that only those nations that "go global" in a socially cohesive manner will reap whatever benefits globalisation holds. In an earlier lecture I concluded: Globalization everywhere provokes particularistic responses which take many forms. There are at least two possible wrong ways of reacting to globalisation: one can either escape into xenophobic "fundamentalism" or "nativist" positions or engage in blind celebration of the "universal" by an uncritical embrace of globalisation. These reactions would constitute two ways of being lost. And both responses are, alas, not absent in Africa. It is my view that the reformist impulses of the nationalist agenda, revamped to reflect the changed times, constitute a useful point of departure in dealing with globalisation. The fate of Africa lies in a collective rethinking of that continent's unfulfilled humanistic tasks in light of what has transpired, and the concrete situation today; so as to recast them into cornerstones of social justice, solidarity and equality and to enable the continent to reconnect with the rest of the world in a mutually beneficial way. We need many more creative institutional designs to respond to the peculiarities of Africa's social pluralism. We may, in the process, have to rethink the attributes of a nation-state in Africa — in terms of cultural basis and territorial exclusivity — in order to give greater authority to regional arrangements and to strengthen regional self-policing. The turn away from the market frenzy brings us back to the question of the state and development. The challenge for Africa will be to establish developmental states that are firmly and democratically embedded in their own societies and that are competent to engage the world and respond to the exigencies of the emerging global order. Such a process is inherently knowledge intensive. The African intellectual must continue to be, in the words of Soyinka, an "author of the language that tries to speak truth to power." One can hope that this time around both state and society will realise that an unfettered intellectual class is an emancipatory force that can be put to good use.

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Writing Africa’s Archaeological Past: Who Writes for Whom?

Graham Connah*

Peoples’ perceptions of themselves are to a large extent shaped by their understanding of their place in history, using that word in its widest possible sense. We are all, whether we like it or not, a product of our past — continually influenced by our own experiences, by those of parents and family members, and by those of the cultural or national group with which we identify. In the economic materialism of capitalist Western society we tend to take such things for granted or try to ignore them altogether but we have a rich documentary and material heritage of which there is a general awareness. In much of the African continent such archives and reminders of the past are sparser or even appear to be absent. Written sources are like lights in the dark that shine out in scattered locations and sometimes only briefly. Oral traditions tend to be more and more distorted the further they reach back in time, and are often difficult to verify. Linguistic studies tend to have serious dating problems. Perforce we must fall back on the physical evidence, of which there is an increasing range including human blood groupings and DNA, palaeoecological reconstruction, plant and animal genetics, and general archaeological data. It is the latter that will be discussed here because in many ways it still has the greatest potential for both the residents of the continent and the rest of the world to rediscover Africa’s past and to take pride in its heritage.

Archaeological research in Africa has been going on much longer than many non-archaeologists realize. For instance, as early as 1858–1860, when even in Europe the subject was only in its infancy, prehistoric stone artefacts were being found in southern Africa. Nevertheless, African archaeology made only slow and very patchy progress during the Colonial period and, although there was a considerable growth in research activity after World War II, it was not until the achievement of independence in many African countries from the 1950s onwards that the subject began to receive the attention that it deserved. Partly this was because the earlier archaeological investigations had predominantly focused on human origins and on so-called ‘Stone Age’ peoples that we would now call stone-using hunter-gatherers. These were the things that mainly interested archaeologists working in Africa during the first half of the twentieth century, because most of them were Europeans or of European origin and their research objectives were often determined by questions generated in Europe or other parts of the world rather than in Africa itself. The result was that early attempts to synthesize African prehistory, such as H. Alimen’s The Prehistory of Africa of 1957 (originally published in French in 1954) and J.D. Clark’s The Prehistory of Africa of 1970, paid little attention to the iron-using agricultural and pastoral societies of the last few thousand years, the very societies that were of far greater relevance and interest to modern African people. With independence came a change, as new African governments recognized the socio-political importance of their more recent past and as the African archaeological profession began to include people of African as well as European descent. Researchers ‘discovered’ what they called ‘the African Iron Age’, an unfortunate term that lingers on despite attempts to replace it. The writer was one of those who contributed to these new developments, first going to Africa in 1961 when he was appointed as a research archaeologist by the newly independent Nigerian Federal Government. This was at a time when African historical studies were also expanding rapidly, as demonstrated by the foundation of the subsequently highly influential Journal of African History during the year before.

Since those days there has been an explosion of archaeological research in Africa, much of it directed to the later periods that had previously been given so little attention. There has also been an explosion of archaeological publication, most of it in English but a lot of it in French and some of it in a variety of other languages including German, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, and others. Noticeably, there has been little such material published in indigenous African languages, so that its circulation has been inevitably limited. Even if this had not been the case, however, the very character of most publications about African archaeology would have limited their readership. Such

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publications have tended to be at three levels, none of which could normally be expected to reach a really wide audience. The most common type of publication has been the specialized paper in archaeological or sometimes historical journals. The African Archaeological Review, Azania, The South African Archaeological Bulletin, and the West African Journal of Archaeology have been amongst the main outlets in English. Such papers have been of enormous importance but, understandably focused on the details and methodological matters, they have hardly made good bedtime reading. Much the same might be said of the second level of archaeological publication, less common than the journal paper because of its substantial cost and limited market, the archaeological monograph. Examples of these would include Thurstan Shaw’s two-volume Igbo Ukwu, this writer’s The Archaeology of Benin, S.C. Munro-Hay’s Excavations at Aksum, and Mark Horton’s Shanga, all works of primary research significance but of interest to only a specialized readership. Such works, by their very nature, are usually narrowly focused on a particular site, area, period or subject.

At both these levels of publication, archaeologists have usually been writing for other archaeologists, or at most for specialists in related fields. In contrast, the third level of publication, that of the broad synthetic work, has usually been aimed at a more general audience, although that audience has varied greatly, from the general educated reader, to the university undergraduate, to the senior levels of secondary education. Examples have included Roland Oliver and Brian Fagan’s Africa in the Iron Age, Thurstan Shaw’s Nigeria: Its Cultural History and Early History, John Sutton’s A Thousand Years of East Africa, Martin Hall’s The Changing Past: Farmers, Kings and Traders in Southern Africa, 200–1860, and Peter Garlake’s The Kingdoms of Africa, as well as perhaps more significantly David Phillipson’s African Archaeology and my own African Civilizations, both of which have gone through two editions and been (perhaps surprisingly) translated into Japanese. These examples are only a few of the general publications that have appeared over the years and mention of them is in no way intended to belittle those not listed here. Some of those, like James Anquandah’s Rediscovering Ghana’s Past, have indeed also made substantial contributions to general understanding. Furthermore, writers in languages other than English have made significant attempts to reach wider audiences, such as Raymond Mauny in his Les Sites Obscures de L’Afrique Noire, and Víctor Martínez in his Arqueología Prehistórica de África.

How far these often courageous attempts have been successful in reaching out to wider readerships is difficult to determine. In particular it is uncertain just what impact they have had in Africa itself, for many of these books have been published outside of the continent and have been either difficult to obtain within Africa itself or priced beyond the limits of both private and institutional pockets. In addition, they have often been pitched at a level that inevitably limited their attraction for the non-technical reader coping with a second language. Only relatively rarely have authors tried to address these problems, such as Thurstan Shaw in Discovering Nigeria’s Past, which originated as a series of broadcasts on Nigerian radio and was published in Ibadan, Nigeria, and Laurel and David Phillipson in East Africa’s Prehistoric Past, that was

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8 West African Journal of Archaeology, edited at the Department of Archaeology in the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, commenced in 1971.
published in Nairobi, Kenya, and based upon a series of articles previously published in a Nairobi Sunday newspaper. However, these examples are such old publications that they are by now probably forgotten even in their country of origin. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that archaeologists conducting research in Africa, whether they are indigenous or expatriate, need to make a far greater effort to reach a broader African readership, be it in schools, in universities, or amongst the general public. In short, archaeologists have to do far more writing for non-archaeologists.

Archaeological researchers, like those in many disciplines, have often tended to avoid 'popularization'. It has been seen as potentially damaging to their scholarly reputation or even, by some, as beneath their notice. In addition, the technical demands of archaeological data acquisition and analysis have sometimes caused archaeologists to overlook the fact that in the end their subject is a literary discipline and that one must not only know one's archaeology but also learn how to write about it in an interesting, stimulating and readable way. What, after all, is the point of laborious, time-consuming and expensive excavation or field survey, and of the consequent analysis and interpretation, unless at the end of it one has something of significance to say and can write about it in such a way that it will actually contribute to human society's understanding of itself? Historians of Africa have never doubted their literary obligations, and books such as John Iliffe's Africans: The History of a Continent or Roland Oliver's The African Experience are notable examples of authorship. In spite of the many attempts already made, archaeologists still have some way to go if they are to be as successful. Yet as one British archaeologist has pointed out, it is not only English, French or Portuguese that are not available, but also Arabic, Amharic, Shona, Luganda, Zulu, Hausa, Yoruba and other major African languages. There have long been African publishers and printers who have produced works in their own languages and there are now an increasing number of African archaeologists whose first language is an African one. Together with Africanist archaeologists outside of Africa, they could write both for Africans and for the world. Archaeologists have the same obligation that David Christian has identified for historians: they need 'to fulfill a task that has to be filled by someone in all societies; that of shaping society's fundamental guiding stories'. As he goes on to say: 'Where scholars are too pernickety to take part in this project, others fill the vacuum. And they will often do the job with less care and honesty.' In short, not only do archaeologists need to write for people in general rather than only for other archaeologists but they must do it themselves rather than abdicating the responsibility to others. We must become quite clear in our minds about who writes for whom.

range of environments and of the emergence of a complex array of socio-political, economic and technological relationships. It is far more than the laboured succession of 'ages', artefacts and sites that archaeological writers have often presented. The African past was dynamic, not static or sequential, both outside and within the continent have all too frequently perceived it. In spite of all this, non-archaeologists, and some of them scholars in other disciplines, still ask this writer the same question that he was asked forty years ago: 'Is there anything to find in Africa?' Clearly we do have a communication problem.

Perhaps radio or television or videos or the Internet could be of help but the global tendency for media providers to trivialize their subject matter and to regard the more 'serious' subjects as uncommercial remains an impediment. Furthermore, in the end someone still has to write the material irrespective of its mode of delivery and in this case the writing should still be done by archaeologists. In addition, in much of Africa electricity is still unreliable or even unavailable, so that the printed book remains potentially the most readily accessible source of information. However, if it is to reach deeply into a broad section of society it needs to be cheap and easily available. It also needs to be appropriately targeted at a range of readership, including primary school, high school, university, and members of the public of varying educational standards. Lastly, some of it at least should be produced in a range of languages, not only English, French and Portuguese but also Arabic, Swahili, Amharic, Shona, Luganda, Zulu, Hausa, Yoruba and other major African languages. There have long been African publishers and printers who have produced works in their own languages and there are now an increasing number of African archaeologists whose first language is an African one. Together with Africanist archaeologists outside of Africa, they could write both for Africans and for the world. Archaeologists have the same obligation that David Christian has identified for historians: they need 'to fulfill a task that has to be filled by someone in all societies; that of shaping society's fundamental guiding stories'. As he goes on to say: 'Where scholars are too pernickety to take part in this project, others fill the vacuum. And they will often do the job with less care and honesty.' In short, not only do archaeologists need to write for people in general rather than only for other archaeologists but they must do it themselves rather than abdicating the responsibility to others. We must become quite clear in our minds about who writes for whom.

The Tragedy of Sierra Leone: Diamonds and Warlords

David Dorward

Introduction

Sierra Leone has all but disappeared from Australian (perhaps global?) consciousness. Last year’s brief flurry of media sensationalism, with its old stereotypes of savagery in Darkest Africa, has given way to silence. The quiet waters of the Rokel carry their silent corpses toward the sea as yet another African tragedy is played out. The prolonged assault on the peasantry by a corrupt state on the one hand and a violent counter-culture of banditry on the other has led to a collapse of any semblance of civil-society. Organised banditry, fuelled by illicit diamond trading with links to international crime and gun running, has threatened to destabilise the whole region.

Since 1998 the international community has attempted to halt this illicit traffic in what are now labelled “blood” or “conflict” diamonds; and to bring the diamond market back under control. While the current United Nations peace monitoring and disarming of warring factions hold some hope for longer-term resolution, pressures from the major Western nations and international bodies, such as the IMF/World Bank, for speedy resolution may yet again bring matters unstuck. As elsewhere across Africa where the access to mineral wealth has fed and sustained conflict, to destroy that access has proved easier said than done. We need therefore to look more closely at the ways in which “blood diamonds” became an integral part of the competition for power that underlies the Sierra Leone conflict. Today’s tragedy was fuelled by the illicit diamond trade which began before independence, and which by the 1990s had reduced the state to a client of a succession of foreign interests. The purpose of this paper is therefore to set down the progressive integration of “blood diamonds” into the politics of this small, poor West African state.

The Background: The Origins of the Diamond Industry and the Birth of Illegal Mining

Sierra Leone, it needs to be remembered, came to independence with considerable promise. There was a long tradition of Western education stretching back to the early nineteenth century. Fournah Bay College, founded in 1827, began awarding degrees from the University of Durham in 1854.

There was a far larger African educated professional class than in most of colonial Africa. The economy was reasonably robust, with a solid mix of peasant-based export agriculture and diverse mining industries, as well as a sound village-based subsistence economy. Despite ethnic-based political rivalries in the immediate post-colonial period and a series of coups by ambitious British-trained junior officers, Sierra Leone in the late 1960s had the outward semblance of stability.

Diamonds were discovered in Sierra Leone in 1930. In 1933, Consolidated African Selection Trust (CAST) obtained a 99-year exclusive agreement from the colonial government to prospect for and market Sierra Leone diamonds. A new corporate entity, Sierra Leone Selection Trust (SLST), was formed to manage the SLST operations, in part due to British government fears of the emergence of a diamond monopoly of South African De Beers. From the coloniser’s perspective, it was a good deal. The Sierra Leone colonial government received 27.5% of net profits, plus £7,000 p.a. ‘rent’, thus lessening demands on the Imperial Treasury, while placing little onus on the local colonial administration. Revenue from diamonds was a significant element in the colonial budget. By 1937, SLST was exporting over £1,000,000 in diamonds. The real expansion, however, came after WWII. While Sierra Leone diamond production in volume was dwarfed by the Belgian Congo (Zaire) and the Gold Coast (Ghana), to say nothing of South Africa, Sierra Leone diamonds were gem-stones of very high quality. Consequently, while Ghana often exported four times the volume of Sierra Leone diamonds, they were worth less than half the value of Sierra Leone exports. The pre-tax and net profits of SLST were consistently higher than CAST-Ghana. However, unlike the well-defined South African diamond ‘pipes’, which could be relatively easily policed by the large mining cartels, Sierra Leone diamond fields were alluvial, creating major security problems.


2 CAST was formed in 1924, by Chester Beatty, an American engineer associated with the Griegheilles mining operations and a close friend of Herbert Hoover, and C.W. Bois of Fournah, La Société Internationale Forestière et Minière du Congo, initially to exploit the main industrial diamond fields in the Gold Coast (Ghana).

3 The Sierra Leone Minerals Ordinance (1927) had vested mineral rights in the Crown, so the local Kono people were not consulted about land alienation, though CAST paid a small surface rent to the local Kono Native Authority, as well as nominal compensation to locals for destruction of farms, trees, etc.


From the start, SLST was confronted with protecting its monopoly. Alluvial diamonds could be recovered from the stream banks by simple panning - low-level technology accessible to local peasants. The colonial authorities in 1936 enacted the Diamond Industry Protection Ordinance, which prohibited strangers from entering Diamond Protected Areas without permission from the British District Commissioner, who served as policeman for SLST and effectively limited the capacity of the local peasants to market diamonds other than through SLST. It was a system based on cooperation between SLST and the colonial authorities who enjoyed a monopoly of power.

By the mid-1950s, illicit diamond dealing had become a major political problem. Sierra Leone nationalists denounced the generous terms enjoyed under the SLST monopoly. Local Kono peasants, resenting the lack of compensation for the wealth generated from 'their land', actively engaged in illicit mining, which the post-war colonial authorities found it politically difficult to move against. In 1955, the colonial government negotiated a major reduction in the duration and area under exclusive control by SLST and tried to regulate the illicit trade through an Alluvial Mining Scheme, effectively giving recognition to a situation it felt politically unable to suppress. It was a situation of 'legalised' illegality that the colonial officials bequeathed to the fledgling independence government. Within a year there were an estimated 75,000 illicit African miners operating in Kono District. They often preferred to sell their gems through local Lebanese merchants, rather than to the official government diamond buyers. In turn, Lebanese merchants smuggled the rough diamonds to the growing Middle Eastern cutting and polishing industry, thus forging a Middle Eastern link that has persisted in various permutations to the present.

**Politicians and Diamonds in Independent Sierra Leone**

The transition to independence in 1961 was characterised by political tensions between the majority peasantry of 'protectorate natives' divided along ethnic lines, and the Western-educated Creole minority, descendants of liberated slaves who dominated the professions, small business and colonial bureaucracy. The Sierra Leone Peoples' Party (SLPP) of Milton Margai, the first Prime Minister, was a coalition of the Creole elite and rural Mende. When Margai died in 1964, his successor and half-brother, Albert Margai, lacked the political acumen to maintain the alliance. He alienated the Creole-dominated civil service by his policy of 'Africanisation'. The SLPP lost the 1967
elections to the All Peoples' Congress (APC), an alliance of northern Temne and the small but influential organized labour, led by Siaka Stevens. The advent of what was portrayed as a Leftist-trade union led APC sparked a series of coups in 1967-68; the colonels ousting the elected ACP government, to be overthrown by the NCOs, power eventually passing to the corporals, at which stage total paralysis led to calls for the restoration of Siaka Stevens in 1968.

Populist Siaka Stevens exploited the resentment against the ubiquitous Lebanese merchants to rally Sierra Leone nationalism behind the APC, while simultaneously building a close relationship with Jamil Mohammed, a leading local Lebanese businessman and illicit diamond merchant. When Jamil presented then President Stevens with a Mercedes-Benz in 1970, rumors circulated that the glove compartment, subsequently the boot, was stuffed with foreign currency. Whatever the substance of the claims they said something about popular perceptions of Jamil and his relationship with Stevens. Senior APC ministers were also rumoured to have been involved in a major diamond robbery in Freetown, at the time one of the largest diamond robberies.

The slide into economic decline began under Siaka Stevens' ineffective and increasingly corrupt government. The diamond robbery occurred in the midst of moves to nationalise SLST. In 1970, the government acquired a 51% stake in a new entity, the National Diamond Mining Company (Sierra Leone) Ltd or DIMINCO, with SLST holding 49%. Thereafter the official exports of Sierra Leone diamonds fell dramatically from over 2 million carats in 1970 to less than 600,000 carats in 1980 to less than 50,000 carats by the end of the 1980s.

The unreconciled tensions within the government and bureaucracy were between the interests of maintaining public revenue from SLST, while key individuals pursued their private economic self-interest by skimming off profits from the illicit diamond trade. The official exports provide a clear indication of the winners. Nonetheless coup and counter coup through the 1970s represented continuing factional conflict in the search for wealth through political power. As Sierra Leone was transformed into a republic with Siaka Stephens as president the 1970s were to be characterised by a collapse of the formal economy, rising urban unemployment and endemic corruption, as the country fell to rank as one of the poorest nations on earth.

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8 In 1984 SLST sold its stake in DIMINCO to Precious Metals Company, owned by Jimal Mohammed, in effect giving institutional cover for Jimal's illicit operations.

9 When Sierra Leone authorities tried to control the illicit diamond trade, illicit buyers moved their operations to Monrovia, where the corrupt American-Liberian government of Pres. Tubman allowed it to operate largely unhindered.
In 1977, there were widespread riots in Freetown, initially sparked by student protests at Fourah Bay College over food and accommodation. Student amenities were superior to that of most Sierra Leonians, but the trappings of British elitist education that permeated Fourah Bay often imbued rural scholarship students with unrealistic aspirations, generating a psychology of alienation. The majority of the expatriate academic staff at Fourah Bay were young and often saw themselves as ‘radicals’. Anti-colonialism and African nationalism permeated much of the Arts syllabus. In Freetown and the major provincial towns, the ranks of the illiterate unemployed were swollen by increasing numbers of O- and A-Level students and, by the late 1970s, university graduates. In turn, disaffected students provided leadership within the various clubs and organizations for unemployed young men that sprouted in the urban areas, preaching a counter-culture based on Marxist rhetoric, African nationalism, Reggae music, marijuana, and a sense of camaraderie that cut across potential educational and ethnic divisions. The links between an articulate disaffected elite and an alienated and often violent unemployed underclass had the potential for revolution.

The government responded to the riots with a state of emergency and then called a general election which the APC won with a reduced majority. Despite widespread fraud and intimidation, the government was able to appeal to the basic conservatism of both peasantry and urban elite, who saw the student-lumpen alliance as a threat. By the time Stevens retired in 1985 however the gulf between the ‘students’ and ruling elite negated any meaningful dialogue. Teachers went unpaid for months on end, hospitals were without basic medicines, and the national infrastructure had collapsed. In response to student demonstrations, the government closed Fourah Bay for several months while university administrators dismissed student ‘ringleaders’, sparking further rioting.

Despite their links with illiterate urban unemployed through the reggae clubs, students were divorced from the masses in Freetown. The heavy-handed suppression of student politics at Fourah Bay College nonetheless bequeathed a radical rhetoric of “People Power” and a core of Libyan-trained ‘revolutionaries’, including a middle-aged former corporal from the provinces, Alfred Foday Sankoh. The birth of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) from the ashes of the student protests has been documented by Ibrahim Abdullah and Patrick Muana. Yet RUF appeal extended beyond the narrow confines of alienated students drawing together a conglomeration of the disaffected- students, urban unemployed, and illicit diamond-miners; those for whom ‘independence’ had brought little yet who bore the brunt of IMF-imposed Structural Adjustment Programs the end of state subsidies, price controls and the shift toward ‘user-pays’ for often-inadequate services.

The local peasantry, alienated from the APC government, who had born the brunt of the United Liberian Movement for Democracy (ULIMO) cross-border incursions, (who used Sierra Leone as a safe haven and sources through control of the illicit diamond trade) nonetheless showed little enthusiasm for RUF. To RUF leaders, local chiefs, merchants, officials, even more prosperous farmers were ‘class enemies’ and were murdered. Young men were forced to carry out RENAMO-style atrocities against their own people, thus cutting themselves off from local refuge and making them dependent upon RUF support. RUF added a new touch, recruits were tattooed so they could be identified, making desertion almost impossible as locals would soon kill them in retaliation. Not all were unwilling recruits. Some itinerant illicit miners, with few local loyalties, were seduced into RUF by the prospects of rape and looting.

Factions and Foreign Allies: Israelis, Liberians and Mercenaries

By the time General Momoh succeeded Stevens as head of state, (illicit) diamond merchant Jamil’s influence was not only extensive in Sierra Leone; he was also helping to fund Amal, the pro-Syrian faction in the Lebanese civil war. It was probably his Lebanese involvement that attracted the attention of Israeli security service, Mossad. The murky 1987 coup, for which Gabriel Kikai, head of the so-called anti-smuggling unit, and first vice-president Francis Minah were executed, also resulted in Jamil’s expulsion from Sierra Leone. And so it was at this time that various Israelis became involved in the illicit Sierra Leone-Libyan diamond trade, including Shabti Kalmanowitch, who was close to Momoh as well as closely associated with both Israeli intelligence and the Russian-Jewish mafia in America and Israel. The

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12 Kalmanowitch also had ‘investments’ in Bophuthatswana Bantustan, an interesting South African connection that is yet to be unpacked. LIAT, his security firm, provided the presidential bodyguard. Sierra Leone gemstones helped fuel the growing Israeli diamond cutting and polishing industry. Subsequently charged with forgery in the US, Kalmanowitch’s trial threatened to expose Israeli intelligence operations in Africa and the US. He fled to Israel, where he was convicted of spying for the Soviets, removing him from US jurisdiction, and later pardoned by Pres. Chaim Herzog.

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Foday Sankoh had been cashiered for involvement in the attempted 1971 coup and subsequently drifted into counter-culture clubs.
significance of the Kalmanowitch saga lay in the links forged between illicit Sierra Leone diamond marketing, Israeli intelligence and Russian-Jewish organized crime in both Israel and America. Meanwhile Monrovia, Liberia, became an increasingly important centre for international illicit diamond trading, drugs, money laundering and arms trade involving various businessmen from Israel, the former Soviet states and Eastern Bloc countries. By the 1980s, Sierra Leone officials and politicians were little more than clients of more powerful foreign interests. They received their cut, while the peasant-miners were paid a fraction of the value of their illicit gems.

The initial links between the RUF and Liberia's Charles Taylor and his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), who came to play such a major role in the illicit diamond trade in partnership with the Sierra Leoneon Front are murky. A number of Sierra Leonians who later figured prominently in RUF fought alongside the NPFL. In 1991, a small group of Libyan-trained Sierra Leonians, allied to Charles Taylor, invaded eastern Sierra Leone. They apparently hoped to replicate Taylor's success in Nimba County by rallying disaffected Kono and others in Kailahun, a long-time centre of opposition to the APC government. For Taylor, the RUF invasion was an opportunity to neutralise his western Liberian Mandingo and Krahn opponents (in ULIMO), who used Sierra Leone as a safe haven.

Mercenary involvement in the civil war grew after twenty six year old Captain Strasser emerged as head of a Military Council in April 1992 following the mutiny of the Sierra Leone Army. Strasser mounted a bloody but unsuccessful military campaign against RUF throughout 1993-94. There were tensions between northern (Temne and Fula) and Mende officers, as well as personal animosities between Strasser and other senior members of the military council. RUF were able to rearmed and replenish their footsoldiers by looting coffee and cocoa farms, as well as the diamond fields, exporting their looting booty through Liberia. In February 1995 however Strasser hired a mercenary force, Ghranka Security Group, led by a Canadian Col. Robert MacKenzie, who, after the latter was killed in a RUF ambush and the Ghrakhas withdrew, turned to the South African mercenaries, Executive Outcomes, already involved in protecting the privately owned Sierra Rutile mine, then the largest titanium-oxide mine in the world.13

Executive Outcomes operated in Sierra Leone through Branch Mining, registered in the Isle of Man and managed by Alan Paterson, formerly of the

Sierra Leone National Diamond Mining Co. Essentially Executive Outcomes would deal with RUF in return for Branch Mining getting a share of the diamond trade. Within weeks the small (200-man) but well-equipped Executive Outcomes mercenary force, in conjunction with local militia, the Kamajors, had not only secured Freetown and the Rutile mine but reclaimed the diamond fields from RUF. The locally recruited Kamajors, trained by Executive Outcomes, were the key to success against the RUF. They had local knowledge of the bush and enjoyed local support. Often from families that had suffered under RUF, they were out for revenge and ruthless against RUF captives. RUF responded with increasing atrocities, in the hope of undermining local morale and support for the Kamajors.14 The civil war itself did not halt, indeed probably hastened, a further coup in January 1996, followed by elections (to which the new military government under international pressure agreed) and a new President, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, who initially maintained security through Executive Outcomes and the local Kamajors militias, with the support of Nigeria-led ECOWAS. When RUF leader Foday Sankoh was forced to the negotiating table, part of the peace accord was the removal of all 'foreign forces' from Sierra Leone, meaning Executive Outcomes and ECOWAS. That Executive Outcomes had been hailed by locals as liberators sat uncomfortably with the liberal press and Western governments and, despite their success against RUF, Kabbah bowed to pressure from both the UK and USA to dismiss them.15 There was pressure from the American administration for their replacement by a group of ex-Pentagon mercenaries, Military Professional Resources Incorporated

From Abidjan to Lome in the Search for Peace

The November 1996 Abidjan Peace Accord was a sell-out of ordinary Sierra Leonians on the altar of expediency.16 Executive Outcomes were forced to leave Sierra Leone. Kabbah accepted a 'government of national unity', which included Foday Sankoh who became minister responsible for the mining

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13 Sierra Rutile was jointly owned by Brisbane-based Consolidated Rutile and Nord Resources of the USA.

14 On the Kamajors see esp Africa et développementAfrica Development, Vol 22, no3/4, a special issue on 'Lumpen culture and political violence in the Sierra Leone civil war' guest editors Ibrahim Abdullah and Yusuf Bangura.

15 In August 1996, Branch Mining was acquired by Carson Gold, registered in Canada, and later Diamond Works of Vancouver, British Columbia. As with many joint-venture mining companies, the corporate paper trail becomes almost impossible to unravel or link back to specific stakeholders. International Alert, a British media firm employed by RUF had at the peace accord meetings accused Executive Outcomes of illicit diamond smuggling, although this went unproven. Nor had Executive Outcomes it seems been involved in the Strasser coup.

16 The November Abidjan Accord on Sierra Leone needs to be viewed against the backdrop of the August 1996 Abuja Accord on Liberia, brokered by the Nigerian dictator Sani Abacha. It heralded the eventual withdrawal of the Nigerian ECOWAS forces and laid the foundation for the flawed July 1997 elections in Liberia that brought Foday Sankoh's ally, Charles Taylor, to power.
region, effectively handing over illicit diamond exploitation to RUf and their Liberian ally. Kabbah proved an inept politician and, in the absence of Executive Outcomes, powerless. In May 1997, he was removed in another coup under Major Johnny Paul Koroma, a 33-year-old ill-educated crisis-lord of the promoted officer. The undisciplined Sierra Leone Army went on a rampage in Freetown, looting and raping. Koroma, himself a warlord, treated Freetown as his personal fief and invited RUf to join his ramshackle junta. Pres. Kabbah fled to Guinea, where he tried to do deals with various dubious international financiers to mount a mercenary counter-coup in February 1998 (and counter to the spirit of UN Security Council Resolution 1132) ECOWAS forces, supported by the Kamajor militia, and with logistical support from Sandline mounted an attack on the Koroma junta. Within a few days the junta had been overthrown and by mid-1998, Pres Kabbah was back in Freetown and RUf forced back into negotiations.

The Lome Accord of 1999 subsequently re-imposed the fragile "government of national unity." Foday Sankoh and RUf were once again 'legitimised' and began demanding the withdrawal of all 'foreign troops', including the United Nations peacekeepers (UNAMSIL), ostensibly responsible for the accord. The initial United Nations UNAMSIL peacekeepers were little more than third-rate mercenaries, troops hired from poorer UN states, and funded on a shoestring by Security Council permanent members. As a result it wasn't long before the Lome package began to unravel. Moreover, United Nations peacekeepers in Sierra Leone in force since 1996, had little real effect. In March 2001, Liberia was accused of training RUf units, and in August 2001, RUf was accused of training RUf units again, and of having formed a new military force. In Freetown, corruption and looting continued, with the division of spoils. In Freetown, endemic corruption continued. Notwithstanding the British Government's unexpectedly more assertive "foreign policy" that led to their increased presence in Sierra Leone, international peacekeeping had failed to bring a genuine peace with any hope of a future.

Control of "Blood Diamonds"
The almost universal collapse of civil society cannot be overcome by garrisoning the entire country with soldiers, much less by a Sierra Leone Army composed of men with a record of willingness to use arms for their own immediate self-aggrandisement. There is need for massive development assistance but the largest 'aid' program has been IMF debt-relief, forgiveness of interest and loans that could never be paid back in any event. The key to curtailing the RUf has been control of the international market in illicit diamonds, the so-called 'blood diamonds', used by RUf, UNITA in Angola and other rebel organizations to fund their military-banditry. The papers discovered in Foday Sankoh's house after his arrest in May 2000, and subsequent international investigations revealed something of the scale of the illicit diamond trade. A carat of diamond is equivalent to one-fifth of a gram and valued at between US$10,000–$15,000. Illicit diamonds worth approximately US$ 2 billion were fenced annually in the mid-1990s. Uncut diamonds could be sold openly in Antwerp, the world's largest wholesale diamond centre. The Hoge Raad voor Diamant (HRD), the umbrella organization of the Belgian diamond industry in Antwerp, was the centre of much of the illicit diamond trading. While imported diamonds were supposed to be declared, Belgian Customs regulations were slack at best, the Belgian government being content to allow HRD a large measure of self-regulation. The diamond trade was obscured by HRD citing the country of export, such as Israel, as the 'country of origin.'

International control of illicit diamonds presently focuses largely on curtailting sales of raw diamonds, a commodity difficult to identify and where documentation is easily subject to forgery. The window of control however is at the cutting and polishing stage, a skilled industry confined to finite but influential countries with powerful allies such as Israel and India. On 5 July 2000, United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1306, prohibiting "... the direct or indirect import of all rough diamonds from Sierra Leone", except for diamonds certified by the Sierra Leone Government. The resolution drew upon a Canadian academic study, The Heart of the Matter: Sierra Leone, Diamonds and Human Society. While it demonstrates what can be achieved by pro-active academics working in conjunction with unions and non-government organisations, Resolution 1306 also illustrates United Nations limitations. The Sierra Leone government has never been able to impose an effective authentication scheme. The 'finger-printing' of raw diamonds is an illusion since the variations are as great within a single diamond field as between fields. Finally, influential organisations and governments are involved in the illicit diamond trade, reaping huge profits. The Cote d'Ivoire exported 1.5 million carats in the mid-1990s, though diamond mining ceased in the

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17 Africa Confidential 31 March 2000, p. 8.

Food and Seed Security in Africa: Protecting Farmers’ Rights

Heather Paul

Introduction

This paper is concerned with food security in Sub-Saharan Africa. It examines the implications for small scale farming systems of the commodification of plant genetic resources reflected by the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources (hereafter the Undertaking) adopted in 1983 and currently under revision. At the beginning of the twenty first century Sub-Saharan Africa was home to almost a quarter of the ‘developing’ world’s hungry people. It had also become a chronically food insecure region. Agriculture across Africa is carried on in complex and often very small ecosystems where (as all over the globe) the plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA) embodied in seed or other planting material are the essential foundations for stable and productive farming systems. Food security depends on access to an adequate supply of seed or other planting material of the appropriate type at the right time. The value of these plant genetic resources, as that part of biodiversity “which nurtures people and which is nurtured by people” is thus beyond economic calculation and vital as the basis of sustainable agriculture.

Access to plant genetic resources as key components in the conservation, control and ownership of biodiversity (genes, varieties and species) has become intensely political over the past 20 years. The debate that led to the Undertaking has been specifically oriented to the agricultural biodiversity essential for global food production and livelihood security. It goes beyond the 30 crops that are often said to feed the world and includes a large number of

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19 1980s. HRC reported importing over 31 million carats from Liberia between 1994 and 1998, though Liberian production is roughly 100-150,000 carats per annum. Israel was a conduit for much of the illicit diamonds sold in Antwerp, as well as a major consumer, developing a thriving diamond cutting and polishing industry. In 1999, Israel exported US$ 5.7 billion in polished and raw diamonds, some 24% of its industrial export by value.19

For ordinary Sierra Leonians the prospects remain bleak. Attention may nevertheless be drawn to two small rays of hope. One was the bill recently introduced into the US Congress that would freeze assets of those involved in importing suspected “blood diamonds” into the lucrative US market. The other was a recent announcement by Mohammed Deen, Sierra Leone Mineral Resources Minister, who promised to hand over to local governments in the diamond-producing region a quarter of the 3 percent export fees paid by diamond exporters, to be used for local infrastructure—schools, clinics, etc. For the first time, local people will have a stake in the diamond industry and a measure of funding for local initiatives. As the funds are based on the number of mining licences, it is hoped it will bring local pressure against illicit diamond miners and raise government revenue, with the scheme extended to other mining areas as they come under government control.

19 Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics.
Food and Agriculture (CGRFA), and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Their debate has largely reflected differences in ideological and cultural approaches to the management and ownership of natural resources, with divisions running on a North-South, intra-national and intra-institutional divide. There are many players representing many views and agendas: from governments and government departments to various facets of the life-science research industry (from the researchers to the lawyers representing life-industry interests). As a food security-related issue with Human Rights and equity overtones it has involved academia and parts of civil society. While the debate internationally centres in the CBD/CGRFA forum, it involves questions of trade and intellectual property and so the World Trade Organisation (WTO), World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV).

The genetic resources debate is complex, broad and beyond the scope of this paper. What is crucial for the right of farmers to save, exchange and sell farmin

saved seed is the question of Intellectual Property protection in the field of agriculture and its impact on the farmers’ control over the use of seed. Intellectual Property (IP) refers to a bundle of rights granted by state authorities which provide a legal monopoly over the commercial exploitation of the intellectual property, and hence the technology embodying it. It is a western concept based on the idea that innovation is the product of the genius of the individual and if that individual shares their innovation with society, then such people deserve economic rights granted by the state in return. IP is meant to protect the inventor or artist (or, more correctly, the owner of the right) from losing control over their innovation. Since the late 20th century however the IP right has been more likely to be owned by corporations, government agencies and universities that employ or fund the inventor’s research rather than the individual inventor.

Four types of Intellectual Property are particularly relevant in the field of agriculture: patents; sui generis systems for cultivated plants (currently, Plant Breeders’ Rights (PBR) or Plant Variety Protection (PVP) systems); trade secrets (unregistered rights over confidential – undisclosed – information, which are protected through common law); and trade marks (branding varieties for commercialisation). These Rights are not just a mark of ownership but are usually used as part of a commercialisation and income generation strategy, where holding the IP is central to the financial success of the Right holder.

The scope and extent of IP law relating to agricultural innovations varies between nations. In most countries plant varieties are not patentable as utility patents. Some patent laws to date have excluded all genetic materials or all
biological materials existing in nature (even if isolated) from being patented. In the US, however, the natural existence of a product per se does not preclude it from patentability. Patenting naturally occurring organisms is a particular concern to ‘developing’ nations given the propensity on the part of some researchers/companies in ‘developed’ nations to consider materials under the stewardship of indigenous and farming communities to be ‘naturally occurring’. Whilst IP laws are rooted in the principle of national sovereignty and therefore vary, greater homogeneity between nations might be expected since the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) came into force (1 January 1995), in so far as the TRIPS provisions require all parties to meet certain minimum standards when protecting intellectual property.

Patents and Protection: Who do they Privilege?
Both patents and sui generis protection of plant varieties are negative rights—that is, they give the right holder the exclusive right to prevent others from doing particular acts with the protected innovation without their permission. The sui generis rights provided for under the UPOV treaty – Plant Breeder’s or Plant Variety Rights – are enacted to protect plants reproduced by sexual means. They are most frequently used in industrial systems to register plants derived through conventional breeding (programs which commonly use selection and cross fertilisation techniques). The legal powers of the PBR holder are not as extensive as those of the patentee.

TRIPS specifies that members of what is now the World Trade Organisation (WTO) “shall provide for the protection of plant varieties either by patents or by an effective sui generis system or by any combination thereof” or face retaliatory action by their trading partners. See system or by any combination thereof or face retaliatory action by their trading partners. See http://www.wto.org/wto/coll/e/pdf/27-trips.pdf.
Article 27.3(b) of the TRIPS agreement: see http://www.wto.org/wto/coll/e/pdf/27-trips.pdf.
The patent is a legal certificate that gives the inventor exclusive right to prevent others from producing, using, selling, or importing the invention for a fixed period of time (usually 17-20 years). Legal action can be taken against those infringing a patent by copying it or selling it.

Until 1991 protection of new varieties of plants under UPOV (eg, UPOV 1978) permitted the so-called ‘farmers’ privilege’ or ‘exemption’ which enabled farmers to save legitimately obtained seed to plant future crops; as well as to exchange and sell protected seed to other farmers without needing to ask for the right owner’s permission or to pay royalties on subsequent generations. With UPOV (1991) which entered into force in April 1998 however the ‘farmers privileges’ became explicitly an option for national laws; no longer available unless reinstated by national legislation in a weakened form and subject to “reasonable limits” and “the safeguarding of the legitimate interests of breeder.” Hence the worry is that farmers’ rights to seed will be subsumed by the rights of commercial breeders. The 1991 Convention also restricts the resowing of a farmer’s saved seed to their own farm; raising doubts as to whether farmers can sow seeds obtained from saved seed stores of other farmers, where such seed is the progeny of protected varieties. UPOV 1991 (Article 5(1)(i)) does have a compulsory exception: that the breeders’ right shouldn’t extend to acts done privately for non-commercial purposes. Hence subsistence farmers farming for non-commercial purposes would fall within that exclusion. Nearly all small farmers however sell some portion of their harvest in their local markets — so withdrawing the exemption if they use protected varieties. Whilst it is unlikely that companies would sue subsistence farmers for marketing a portion of their harvest, the ability to do so exists and a threatening ‘right’ hanging over the head of farmers working within systems covered by the 1991 Act. The right may thus restrict their capacity to maintain or to enhance genetic diversity (particularly of the open-pollinated crops) through their own innovative abilities.

This is both a local livelihood/food security and international food security concern as UPOV has gained increasing prominence as a model for Plant Breeder’s Rights as a result of the TRIPS agreement. Apart from the negative impacts of exclusion from saving seed on farmer livelihoods and biodiversity per se, the Distinct, Uniform, Stable (DUS) criteria of UPOV-like legislation in these Acts, however, farm saved seed was not explicitly mentioned with the key clause [Clause 5(1)] indicating that the authorisation of the breeder is not required for the production and non-commercial marketing of protected material.

This signalled the closing date for nations to adopt the 1978 Act, although nations which had sent UPOV their draft laws for review prior to April, were exempted. India thus has the opportunity of developing its PBR laws in line with the 1978 Act.

As of April 1999, there were 43 States party to the UPOV Convention, of which 11 were party to the 1991 version. For membership see the UPOV web site: http://www.upov.int/eng/abit/pdf/ ratifnem.pdf.
has also proved a concern in relation to its possible negative impacts on the viability of maintaining *in situ* biodiversity. This would especially be the case if commercial crops came to dominate the market in the agricultural biodiverse-generating farming systems of Africa.

Within Sub-Saharan Africa to date only South Africa and Kenya are members of UPOV (1978 version only).

In addition, the 62 member Organisation of African Unity (OAU) agreed in January 1999 to create an Africa-wide strategy on non-UPOV *sui generis* protection — that is, to develop a Model Law, combining the interests of plant breeders with the region’s political commitment to ‘Farmers’ Rights’ (see below), including the right to sow saved seed. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is also drafting a common legislative framework for *sui generis* rights that protects the traditional knowledge of local communities in cooperation with the OAU. However in 1999 eleven of the poorest African countries also agreed (pending ratification) to sign the 1991 UPOV Convention to fulfil their TRIPS obligations. These nations (many Sub-Saharan) are members of the French-speaking African Organisation of Intellectual Property (OAPI) and, as least-developed countries, do not have to implement TRIPS 27.3(b) until January 1, 2006. To date, no OAPI member is a party to the UPOV convention.

The loss of the ‘farmers’ privilege’ is critical for local livelihood/food security. Whilst there are other components to developing local and regional food self-sufficiency, maximising seed (and other planting material) security for farmers is one of the most important. PGRFA, as seed, are in most cases both the beginning of the crop production process and, in the form of grain, the endpoint of agricultural life. That is, because of its reproducibility, seed (wheat, for example) can be used to ‘produce from’ or it can be used for human or animal consumption. It is the first and foremost source of food.

Across Africa (as internationally) seed (‘to produce from’ ) is supplied to farmers from two main sources: the informal sector (small-holder farmers) as well as the formal (market-driven) sector (involving research institutes, parastatal organisations and private companies). The informal sector has a long tradition behind it. The ability of farmers to save some of the harvested grain to be used as planting stock in the following growing season is a practice by which farmers have continued production since the beginning of agriculture. In the past it meant that even where farmers first purchased a variety in the market place the new purchase became part of the farmers’ means of production. The farmer had the choice to re-enter the market for seed supply or not. Saved seed of self-pollinators (eg. wheat, barley and rice) could be maintained as genetically true through many generations, making it easy for farmers to re-sow from saved seed.

On-farm seed production is an important food security issue for two main reasons. First, most (an estimated 1.4 billion) farmers in ‘developing’ nations, including across Africa, (mainly subsistence or small-scale semi-commercial farmers) are largely self-providing in terms of local seed (as well as plant material for vegetatively propagated crops). These farmers are the primary seed producers as well as seed users and food producers in their regions and, thus, lie at the heart of local food security. They rely on saving seed from previous harvests, their local plant development/experimentation, and community seed exchange (barter-based or social obligation-based between neighbours or from local markets) as their primary source of seeds, although in the more commercial villages seeds may also be sold farmer to farmer.

The figures for Africa are informative. An estimated 85% of Ethiopian farmers and 90% of African farmers as a whole obtain their seed from the informal sector. On-farm seed multiplication and farmer-saved seed also constitute 95-100% of planting seed used for open-pollinated maize, sorghum, food legumes, roots and tuber crops in the SADC region. It is thus the informal sector which primarily supplies the seed systems underpinning local food production, predominantly the self-pollinating crops, but also some open-pollinated crops as well (depending on the sowing rate per hectare.

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14 Zimbabwe has a plant breeders’ rights system but it is non compliant with UPOV.
15 RAFl, Genotypes, February 1999.
16 OAPI member nations are: Benin, Burkina-Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Gabon, Guinea (Conakry), Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Togo.
17 Propagation by seeds is the major method by which plants reproduce in nature and is the most widely used method for cultivated crops.

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18 These systems may also coexist with a system where some farmers specialise in producing seed for their local market.
multiplication rate, and how well they store). It is also the informal sector which is almost solely responsible for ensuring the sustainable supply of propagating material of the asexually propagated food crops in the region (cassava, yams, potato, sweet potato etc.). In contrast, and whilst considerable effort has been put into strengthening the formal seed sector in Africa, many of the parastatal organisations have only achieved limited success to date whilst the private sector has only focused on species and crops that show a profit. In addition, both the parastatals and the private sector have largely focused on breeding and selling hybrids (see below) – especially maize, sunflowers and sorghum – rather than self- or open-pollinated varieties.  

Clearly, on-farm seed production remains vital to the food security of Sub-Saharan Africans. At the heart of on-farm seed production and the informal seed supply system per se is relatively open exchange. Such exchange provides local farmers with a source of information and genetic material adapted to their region to supplement their own stores, a flow which is essential for the continuation of on-farm varietal diversity and crop viability. Such exchange networks also distribute the products of formal sector breeders ('modern' varieties) taken up by the small proportion of first-adopter farmers who have entitlements available to obtain them. Many of the resource-poor, with little or nothing to invest or risk, are thus able to access small quantities of formal sector seed where warranted through gift or as a loan, rarely having to find cash for the transaction.  

Such inter-farmer or inter-household exchanges, together with the ability to retain seed for re-sowing, are the lynchpins of the informal sector's ability to provide seed in good time for sowing (albeit, being an unstable source at times, in the face of localized calamities such as drought or war).

Second, farm-saved seed (and its relatively open exchange) in non-industrialized farming systems is a food security issue at the global level as well. We need access to the treasure chest of genetic diversity inherent in these farming systems. This is because the diversity in the PGRFA pantry is essential for the future of agriculture, e.g. providing us with the genetic ingredients to adapt to ever-changing needs and conditions. Yet because of the nature of 'modern'/industrialized agricultural systems (increasingly genetically uniform with low-in-field diversity) the distribution of genetically diverse PGRFA is uneven between nations; being far more prevalent in the less industrialized agricultural systems and nations. As the above suggests it is farmers of the non-industrialized systems who are the key actors in conserving and improving diverse PGRFA, with their constant on-farm selection ensuring crop evolution.

Storage of seeds in gene banks is useful to agriculture world-wide, but it does not ensure an ongoing evolution and maintenance of PGRFA. Food security is dependent on conservation in the field (in situ) – it is dependent on the people who use PGRFA and maintain its diversity on a day to day basis as part of their livelihood strategy. If rural communities' contribution to crop evolution and conservation needs to be valued (even if it is for no other reason than the utilitarian), the issue is how to encourage community innovators and build their innovative and conservation capacity. As an example, one current strategy developed to enhance genetic materials on-farm, for and by farmers, is the 'Seeds of Survival Program' in Ethiopia. The program supports the conservation, enhancement and effective use of the highly diverse farmers' varieties (landraces) that Ethiopian farmers have developed over the centuries. The initiative is proving successful to date, with a sustained and increased diversity of local crops and their varieties, and productivity increases of the farmers' cultivars up by 31.7%, out yielding their high input counterparts on the average by 47.5%.

PGRFA are the main input for producing new cultivated varieties being the elemental pantry containing valuable genetic (gene and genotype) ingredients. Diversity within the PGRFA pantry is essential as diversity acts to smooth (stabilize) inconsistency in yields (across varieties and crops), provides insurance against future adverse conditions (enabling adaptation of future varieties to climatic change or new diseases), and a treasure chest of as yet unknown valuable resources. FAO 1996, op cit. Cooper, D., Engels, J. and Frison, E. (1994). A Multilateral System for Plant Genetic Resources: Imperatives, Achievements and Challenges. Issues in Plant Genetic Resources No. 2. May. IPGRI, Rome.

On farm conservation is recognised as complementary to gene bank (ex situ) collections; ex situ germplasm cannot adapt to constantly evolving pests, diseases, and the ever changing needs of local communities. FAO 1996


24 ibid pg 6.
Separation from the most central means of production—the commodification of the seed. Given the importance of on-farm seed production and the informal seed exchange system to local and international food security, it is clear that any IPR legislation that affects on-farm control of the seed and potentially weakens the informal seed sector warrants close scrutiny. Throughout the 20th century the most significant change in agricultural production under capitalism has been the displacement of production activities off-farm and the production of these inputs in an industrial setting. It was not until the development of hybridisation techniques in plant breeding, however, that the farmer was separated from the reproduction of the seed.

The use of hybrid seed meant that farmers could no longer rely on saved seed for on-farm reproduction, as saved and replanted seed would either prove sterile or reduced in performance. Reliance on commercially bred hybrid seeds (eg. maize) meant purchasing seed from seed merchants for every sowing season. Hybrids were also bred for input responsiveness to fertilisers, pesticides and irrigation systems. In the context of commodity-oriented production, the interdependence between seeds and inputs entrapped many of the world’s poorer farmers into a cycle of debt. Farmers became dependent, increasingly caught within the technological treadmill cycle where farmers are forced into buying inputs to boost yields enough to cover costs and to compete in the market place. The treadmill sees innovator’s rents disappear with the spread of the new technologies and an increase in the centralisation of agriculture as failed or non-adopters suffer economic loss.

Other biological means for bringing the farmer to market to buy seed (and other inputs) have also been targeted. Most controversial are the germplasm protection systems (protection, in terms of protecting research investments by capital) that are now being developed through the power of genetic engineering techniques. Despite these biological means, commodification of the seed has been taken to its greatest heights to date through legal means, with the expansion of intellectual property rights to life-forms. Like the more recent biotechnical tools under development, the legal tools (particularly patents and the sui generis protection for varieties provided by the UPOV 1991) are designed to give the seed industry (as opposed to farmers or local communities) greater control and protection over genetic components. IP protection systems outlined above clearly have the potential to harm the ability of farmers to maintain and develop PGRFA. Just as with the biological means, commodification of the seed through intellectual property can impede the farmers’ control over the use of the protected seed.

Farmers’ Rights

The principle of Farmers’ Rights “arising from the past, present and future contributions of farmers in conserving, improving, and making available plant genetic resources was first endorsed by the FAO in 1989 as a counterbalance to greater industry control over genetics and to Plant Breeders Rights.” While many governments have now embraced the principle currently support for the concept is a bit like support for ‘sustainable development’. We can agree to support it at the level of a concept but have difficulty with its definition and thus support in concrete terms. There are differing interpretations related to its legal status (as a constitutional, community or individual right) and how it should be protected (eg. nationally or internationally); and to scope of the level of transfer. The issue here is how the material reward would best be met: whether inter alia by compensation from an International Fund, through the development of a sui generis right that includes Farmers’ Rights at the national level; or by developing the concept as a broader bundle of rights of which the right in particular to re-sown saved seed would be integral.

The bundle of rights could also be interpreted to mean the right of farmers maintaining and producing PGRFA to: access, save and exchange seed; provide prior informed consent before seed is collected; refuse access; receive information on the materials collected; get public credit for providing materials; and to participate in defining the needs in breeding programs etc. For some too Farmers’ Rights imply linkage between the Right and rural development in national development plans.

As it currently stands, inter-governmental negotiations over the Undertaking are at the stage of agreeing that it will be up to national governments to take


28 On the genetic use restriction technology (GURT) known as the ‘terminator technology’, for example, see Cohen, M. ‘How the terminator terminates: an explanation for the non-scientists of a remarkable patent for killing second generation seeds of crop plants’. www.bio.indiana.edu/people/terminator.html

29 Sui generis means of its own kind or class.


31 The Rights, an annex to the aforementioned International Undertaking, were vested in the International Community.


measures to protect and promote Farmers’ Rights as appropriate (as per the Undertaking re-negotiations, Contact Group decision of 1999). In addition, Article 15.3 of the contact group revision of 1999 states that "nothing in this Article shall be interpreted to limit any rights that farmers have to save, use, exchange and sell farm-saved seed/propagating material, subject to national law and as appropriate". (Emphasis added). It appears thus that national governments could still use their IP laws to prevent saving and exchanging seed.

The subsumption of Farmers’ Rights to national legislation has outraged many organisations and individuals concerned with food security. It also seems likely that the Contact Group’s decision on Farmers’ Rights will be opposed in future Undertaking negotiations. It is also possible for Article 15 to be renegotiated at an extraordinary session of the Commission, if not by the Contact Group. Elements of Farmers’ Rights could also be taken up in the review of the Right to Food (FAO and UNHRC joint activity) (with some suggesting that the Commission itself could introduce the concept formally into the review). Implementation of the Global Plan of Action (a quid pro quo of the Undertaking) and an important part of the FAO’s Global System, adopted at Leipzig in 1996, may also offer a way of implementing Farmers’ Rights effectively as an international effort. This would especially be the case if the GPA afforded special access to resources for farming communities.

Given the lack of a final resolution on the Undertaking to date and the ongoing concern over the handling of the Farmers’ Rights issue by the Contact Group, it remains to be seen what ‘Farmers’ Rights’ will involve, if and when it is finally put into practice. The extent to which the WTO/TRIPS is permitted to impede Farmers’ Rights, however conceived, also remains to be seen. Much will depend upon the breadth to which sui generis rights can extend beyond the UPOV model.

Whatever means for implementing Farmers’ Rights is devised the bottom line is that, if food security is to be assured at the local, regional and international level, then farmers providing the diverse PGRFA must maintain the right to use, re-sow, experiment with and exchange seeds. Without this use and exchange right we will not have seed security in the future and we will not have food and thus health and human security.

As the Kenyan submission for the Preparations for the 1999 WTO Ministerial Conference, Kenya (on behalf of the African Group) made clear, in relation to a revision of Article 27.3(b) of TRIPS, sui generis law for plant variety protection should provide for:

i. the protection of the innovations of indigenous and local farming communities in developing countries, consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources;

ii. the continuation of the traditional farming practices including the right to save, exchange and save seeds, and sell their harvest;...

The right of resource-poor small scale farmers of the poor world to control decisions about how they use saved-seed must be accepted as an internationally supported and facilitated Right. An area of such importance to local and international food and human security should not be left to the possibility of these Rights being subordinated (eg to monopoly rights) at the national level. Farmers’ Rights is a critical issue for the resource poor farmers of Sub-Saharan Africa, and their Rights to use, re-sow, experiment with, and exchange seeds, should be defended without qualification.

References:

32 The Contact Group met during the eighth regular meeting of the CGRFA to discuss the Undertaking text, and established texts for three key Articles, including Article 15, relating to Farmers’ Rights. The text of their revision can be found in CGRFA-8/99/Rep, Appendix E and downloaded from the CGRFA web site at http://www.fao.org/ag/cgrfa/s8html

33 WTO/GC/W/302. 6 August 1999.
These Truths We No Longer Hold
Self-Evident!
A Review Essay

Scott MacWilliam


In a recent issue of the Review and Newsletter, I suggested that there could be a major shift underway amounting to a reformulation of the idea and practice of development internationally. In this essay, that theme will be pursued in reviewing the above books, two of them dealing with continent-wide changes and the third laying out a possible direction, sustainable development, in one of the world’s poorest countries, Mozambique. The central proposition advanced here is that if the age of non-development, which

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encompassed much of the last two decades of the century, is over, then a renewed developmental phase akin to the boom period after World War II is still struggling to be born. The African experience says much about the prospects for any renewal as well the constraints inherent in any advance.

Development, as is well known, implies a simultaneous process of destruction and renewal. The point is as relevant to the idea as it is to the practice of development. The formulation of the modern idea of development, work in which the early nineteenth century positivists were especially influential, involved settling accounts with numerous precursors. These earlier ideas included progress, as it appeared in the work of optimists (e.g. Adam Smith) and pessimists, of whom Thomas Malthus is one of the better known. In a particular sense, development became a structure erected upon the site previously occupied by and through the demolition of progress.

So too with contemporary attempts to redevelop: settling with, wiping away the detritus of ideas which were so central to the most recent phase of non-development, has a crucial role. African Development and The Politics of Patronage neatly expose important components of the decomposition process.

African Development is especially striking for the manner in which so many premises of the non-development phase are exposed, then dismissed or substantially modified. From the opening lines of the Preface, credited to Rubens Ricupero, Secretary-General of UNCTAD, until the concluding pages of the volume there regularly appear objections to and rejections of propositions which had become received wisdom. To cite just a few of the propositions can only give a taste of the volume’s direction: for anyone interested in the historiography of development studies the list of formerly powerful lines of argument paraded and rebutted in this slender volume makes fascinating reading. For instance, it is now acknowledged that the late colonial as well as the early post-Independence periods were associated with rapid economic growth in many countries of SSA (Sub-Saharan Africa) (pp.3-6). So promising was this ‘take-off’, and so substantial the state’s part in propelling ‘respectable, and in some countries spectacular, growth rates’ that what is now needed, according to Ricupero (p.xi), is further ‘(r)reforms...(so that) the African state (can) once again...assume its developmental role’. Yep – ‘once again’, and not just ‘for the first time become’!

Post-independence change was driven by strong investment growth, including in agriculture where investment ‘in the cultivation of new land helped to increase output’ (p.4). Further, ‘in most cases, public sector investment played a leading role in the accumulation process, made possible both by development aid and by a growing revenue base’ (p.4). Even after the early 1970s, as growth faltered, there was no systematic burdening of African farmers by taxes and charges: the fashionable so-called ‘urban bias’ does not receive any support here (cf.p.21). Instead ‘in general, farmers in SSA appear to have been protected from adverse trends in world terms of trade for agricultural commodities’ (p.48). The result was that even as international prices turned against countries dependent upon the export of particular crops for revenues, the ‘performance of agriculture did not deteriorate drastically in the 1980s compared with the previous decade’ (p.9).

African Development also strengthens a point previously established for Kenya by Barbara Grosh. In citing ‘a recent study of 53 developing countries, including 10 in SSA, (which concluded that) in the 1980s public investment appears to have been generally more productive than private investment’, the way is opened for an emphasis upon the need for ‘complementarity between public and private investments’ (p.13). The point of complementarity, at least for the sponsors of African Development, is to further strengthen agriculture as a means of avoiding poverty, lifting living standards and providing the basis for the transfer of resources into manufacturing, where the potential for further productivity increases may be greater.

African Development lists several reasons why, despite the favourable expansion of the mid-1990s on the back of improved markets for agricultural exports, a ‘take-off into rapid and sustained economic growth’ has not yet occurred. These include the over-hang of indebtedness, the instability associated with flows of international investment, and an ‘institutional hiatus’, that is states weakened by the reforms of the 1980s (p.109). Most importantly of all, there is the thinness of ‘the tissue of a modern entrepreneurial class...in most African countries’ (p.99). Thus ‘stalled growth across much of SSA is linked to the failure of the State to gradually cede its initial economic power to a nascent independent entrepreneurial class which could assume the lead role in a dynamic accumulation process.’(p.99) As to why the failure occurred, African Development is largely silent, but one brief discussion of the character

2 Doctrines of Development pp.12-21
of the local accumulators hints at a larger explanation and one which concurs with the central thesis of The Politics of Patronage.

Explicitly drawing upon John Iliiffe’s account The Emergence of African Capitalism: African Development is content to eschew the standard line propagated by dependency thinkers since at least the early 1970s. Due to the weight of international capital, and the dominance of European settlers who occupied the best land, Africans ‘were largely relegated to artisanship and commercial activities in the informal sector’ (p.5, Box 1). Even where, as in Côte d’Ivoire, ‘land-based capitalists’ held political and administrative positions after independence, investments accrued from farming and the occupation of higher paid positions were directed at land and property rather than into industrial production. With the continued dominance of international capital, even in Kenya and Nigeria, local capitalists remained in small-scale activities.6

But had African capitalists been large-scale, why would their activities promote national development?7 African Development is silent on this point, and the vacuum is only enlarged by Tangri, who in the process shows how one of the pasts of non-development still weighs upon the present. ‘Tangri is a reformed dependency thinker. Thus (p.11): ‘At the time of independence, African countries possessed the classic characteristics of the phenomenon of underdevelopment’.

During and as an effect of colonialism, these characteristics included, following the early Colin Leys and the unreconstructed Richard Sandbrook, that ‘African societies were over-whelmingly peasant societies, not capitalist ones’ (p8). (The Kenya debate, sparked as much by Leys’ early 1970s formulation along these lines, and which led to extensive and detailed work on what such a claim might mean and be worth, does not feature in Tangri’s account.) As a consequence, with independence the post-colonial state fell into the hands of not a real bourgeoisie, with national developmental objectives but ‘educated and petty bourgeois elements’ whose rivalry was formed through ethnic and regional ties. ‘Considerations of clientelism’ (p.9) tied leaders to followers. The East Asian developmental model had no African parallel, as African leaders used state resources to secure their political grip, often by authoritarian means, and so a stunted crony capitalism was all that could develop. As Tangri puts it (p.11): ‘economic resource allocation has served political and personal ends with less than salutary consequences for the growth of Africa’s economies’.

However Tangri is only a dependency thinker in a limited sense. Unlike andre Gunder Frank and others who attached development to socialism and national autonomy, Tangri espouses much which is currently fashionable with international agencies, including the World Bank. The problem of development in Africa is primarily internal and can be summed up in a few words: free local capital, and especially the indigenous bourgeoisie, from the impediments constructed by the political class which has ruled since Independence through paternalism. Then let a developmental bourgeoisie take over. That is, eliminate the dependent status of domestic capital, release it from reliance upon the patronage of the state and insert business leaders, rather than political figures, into ‘top economic decision-making circles’ (p.80). Noticeably, Tangri is remarkably silent on whether this is how actually existing capitalism works anywhere else.

Freeing up means reducing the space occupied by state marketing authorities, financial institutions and manufacturing instrumentalities constructed for nationalist and related purposes during the late colonial and early independence periods. ‘State involvement arose where an indigenous private sector hardly existed and public enterprises were created to take over from a foreign-controlled private sector or to promote a weak national private sector’ (p.21). The need of political elites to maintain themselves in power via control over resources, including jobs, also purportedly explains the expansion of public enterprises.

Although acknowledging the difficulty of assessing the performance of public enterprises, Tangri nevertheless commits unreservedly to the line that these waste scarce resources crowd out private investment and generally meet

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5 Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983

6 While citing the case of Kenya, African Development relies upon Iliiffe’s account rather than drawing upon the different conclusions reached by Nicola Swainson’s seminal The Development of Corporate Capitalism in Kenya, 1918-1977 (London: Heinemann, 1980).

7 This was a classic question for official and unofficial Marxism immediately after World War I, including when the Comintern was debating the appropriate stance to be taken towards nationalist anti-colonial movements. See M.P.Cowan and S.MacWilliam Indigenous Capital in Kenya: the ‘Indian’ dimension of debate Interkont Books 8 Helsinki:IDS, University of Helsinki, 1996, esp.Chs. 1 and 2.
political rather than economic objectives. He is aware of but not sympathetic to
the claims of Grosh and others (see above) that the evidence on the relative
productivity of state enterprises by comparison to private firms is less than
unambiguous. Instead Tangri baldly asserts that ‘the empirical evidence
demonstrates that the overall record of Africa’s public sector companies has
been poor’ (p.23). (Low efficiency and low profitability (impose)
un sustainable burdens on government budgets’ (pp.23-24).

Because of the importance of state enterprises for the holders of political
power, the pace of privatization has been slow, especially in the 1980s and
early 1990s. Despite the shifting ideological climate, in which the fashion of
privatization became more and more ascendant among the political elite,
subject to gathering international pressure, ‘state sector divestment (remained)
not extensive in most countries’ (p.44). Governments also established new
state instrumentalities, even as there appeared to be a growing momentum
towards privatization pushed by major international institutions (p.55).

While the case for continuing privatization remains overwhelming, according
to Tangri and international donors, what is also needed is a ‘reorientation of
state economic functions...as well as a significant improvement in state
economic performance’ (p.131). Tangri’s concluding chapter is used to
position himself within the ‘bringing the state back in’ school which has
become increasingly fashionable internationally. So what is now needed is an
African developmental state, along supposed Asian lines. But if ‘reorientation’
is required, from whence will it come, since patron-client politics still
dominates and ‘(h)ardly any African government can implement a strong-state
led approach to development’ (p.132)? In other words, how can intentional
development be made to join the spontaneous process of development on a
national scale of reckoning? The Politics of Patronage goes no further than
African Development toward answering this critical question.

As Cowen and MacWilliam have argued, following David Blackbourn’s
seminal account of the formation of the German bourgeoisie,9 there is
an important distinction which is necessary if the search for developers, trustees

introduction’ in D.Blackbourn and R.J.Evans eds. The German Bourgeoisie: essays on the history
of the German middle class from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century
of the ideas, including Bildung (cultural formation, taste, cultivation) which became so central
to the consciousness of the bourgeoisie in modern Germany: see Terry Pinkard Hegel A

of national development, is to advance. The distinction, expressed for
Germany as between the propertied and educated bourgeoisie, is central to the
matter of class agency, or awareness of class distinctiveness that forms the
basis for class action.10 Contrary to the dependency idea that this capacity is
lacking due to the continued existence of a comprador or dependent class in
Africa, formed only after Independence, Cowen and MacWilliam show how
for Kenya at least, indigenous capital was established in agriculture from the
nineteenth century. The location played a critical part in the class’s
contribution to the late colonial-initiated agrarian doctrine of development. It
was this doctrine which after 1964 was so important for the very significant
rate of growth of the Kenyan economy, a rate which made the country an
exemplar for African development, until at least the 1980s.11 Agricultural
expansion made possible local manufacturing of a wide range of products for
the domestic market, along the lines of what is now wrongly described, as well
as discredited as mere import substituting industrialization.12

The agrarian origins of indigenous capital, while setting its ambitions to
expanded ownership of largeholdings against the position occupied by the
mass of peasant households, nevertheless made it necessary for the class to
subscribe to agrarian development as the means of satisfying the aspirations of
large and small holders. As Cowen and MacWilliam have shown, ‘the African
indigenous class’ of capital aspired to be the ‘national’ on account of both its
aspiration to command state power and its position in agriculture’13 By
comparison, Asian capital was locked out of agriculture and located initially in
trade as the bearer to the majority African population of each and every
unfavourable movement in consumer prices. Subsequently, even as some
Asians moved into large-scale industry, this layer of local capital could never
have substantial aspirations to hold the apex of power in the national state nor
to act as the trustee for national development. That is, the ‘take-off’ of African

10 Indigenous Capital in Kenya pp.76-79
11 Doctrines of Development Ch.6: S.MacWilliam, F.Desaunin and W.Timms Domestic Food
Production and Political Conflict in Kenya Indian Ocean Centre for Peace Studies Monograph
No.11 Nidelands University of Western Australia, 1995; Michael Chege ‘Introducing Race as a
Variable into the Political Economy of Kenya debate: An Incendiary Idea’ African Affairs V.97,
1998,pp.209-230
12 Chege ‘Introducing Race’ notes (pp.220-223), as do Cowen and MacWilliam Indigenous
Capital in Kenya (pp.122-124), that post-Independence in Kenya, by far the largest proportion
of the increase in domestic manufacturing has been possible because of the expansion of
smallholding production.
13 Indigenous Capital in Kenya p.79, and Ch.5.
Development, in the case of Kenya at least, was partly the consequence of indigenous capital’s awareness of a national developmental objective.  

Unfortunately, Sustainable Development in Mozambique sheds little light on the important matters raised by the other two books. In 25 essays, academics, state officials and others, largely members of intermediate strata, formulate ‘a vision’ which seeks to adjust development in one of the world’s poorest countries to contemporary international conditions. In reading the collection, one is reminded of The Communist Manifesto’s passages on utopian socialism, even though redistributionism is the closest Sustainable Development gets to socialism. The following sentences seem especially fitting:  

‘Historical action is to yield to their personal inventive action, historically created conditions of emancipation to fantastic ones, and the gradual, spontaneous class organization of the proletariat to an organization of society specially contrived by these inventors. Future history resolves itself, in their eyes, into the propaganda and the practical carrying out of their social plans’.  

Take the analogy with which the editors, Ferraz and Munslow, introduce the proposed objective of sustainable development, joining economic growth, redistribution of wealth with environmentalism. They state (p.2):  

‘There is an awareness that if we want to keep travelling safely in our planetary vehicle around the solar system, we had better look after spaceship earth in the same way that we look after our own motor car’.  

Yet this specific compartment of ‘spaceship earth’ has ‘a modern history...dominated by destruction rather than development’ (p.1). Millions of people have been displaced by war. The economy has been ravaged to such an extent that the country’s GDP per capita amounts to about US$80 (p.46). Multilateral debt payments are anticipated to rise by 61% between 1997 and 2002 to US$94.4m (p.47). Sixty per cent of the population lives in absolute poverty (p.78). In such circumstances, to whom might such an analogy be directed? Correct- Sustainable Development is largely statements of intent to satisfy international donors of the seriousness with which 1990s environmental goals are being taken. In return, hopefully, there will be debt reduction, even cancellation. As well, the objectives are intended to produce sufficient economic growth to make a return to 1970s social democratic ‘basic needs’ possible, without permitting further soil, water and air pollution.  

How is all this to be done? By accepting 1980s and early 1990s conditions applied by the World Bank and other international agencies for structural adjustment, privatization of state activities, and lowering wages-in other words market reforms. As the editors conclude in a postcript to Ch.4 ‘A Strategy for Reducing the External Debt’, by Luis Diogo, ‘(t)he government has convinced the World Bank and the IMF of its sincerity of intent through its adherence to the tough structural adjustment programmes implemented in the face of serious criticisms, both at home and abroad, of the social costs associated with these measures.’  

And the consequences of all this sincerity? The ease of privatization with its attendant purpose, enlarging the space occupied by indigenous capital, is suggestive. Joao Godinho Alves chapter 5 ‘Privatizing the State Enterprise Sector’ commences by stressing the importance of foreign investment for future growth, and the poor performance of state enterprises between 1976 and 1989, when the country was torn by war. Despite earlier attempts at reform, it took the imposition of the 1990 Constitution with an emphasis upon establishing a market economy, and the 1992 peace settlement, to make further change possible. By 1998, privatization had been completed (p.65), with the great bulk of the companies acquired by Mozambican ‘companies or citizens’. Of the net revenue of about US$65million earned from privatization in the critical period 1989 and 1995, ‘approximately 60% of the funds from the sales have come from abroad’ (p.59). Over 90% of the 502 small to medium companies privatized during the same period were sold to Mozambican entrepreneurs. Thus was much of the country’s manufacturing capacity sold off.  

While there is little detailed analysis of the process and its initial effects, either in Alves’ essay or elsewhere in the collection, there are tit-bits. Odete Semiao (Chapter 6 ‘Industrial projects for sustainable development’) notes how industrial production in Mozambique cannot be considered in isolation from the processes occurring in the southern African region. Direct foreign investment (DFI) has increased, albeit in a step-wise manner, and this investment for the most part involves joint partnership arrangements between  

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14 Chege ‘Introducing Race’ and Cowen and MacWilliam Indigenous Capital in Kenya each draw upon David Leonard African Successes: four public managers of Kenyan rural development Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991. Leonard had shown, through an analysis of important and successful state agencies, how the much-maligned straddling between state employment and private accumulation by key bourgeois, at particular moments and in specific instances strengthened operations in central fields of state operations. The operations remain central to the supervision and extension of the most productive area of the economy, smallholder agriculture. These members of indigenous capital united in their persons what Blackburn described for Germany as the profligate and educated bourgeoisie.  

international investors and local partners (p.64). Presumably, too, this DFI is related to the massive sell-off of recently acquired, former state assets by local entrepreneurs.

As Alves explains, ‘(a)lthough most privatized companies have been adjudicated to nationals, 70% of them have not been able subsequently to continue their basic activities’. Thus: ‘What usually happens is that a company is bought in order to resell the plant installation or to turn the buildings into warehouses, places of worship or of entertainment, among other functions’ (p.62).

Although intended to provide support for the asset sell-off, the only evidence of the effect of privatization upon company productivity is a brief reference to the Sabrina clothing factory in Maputo. Purchased by ‘mixed capital’, the ‘quality of the Sabrina product has been compared to that of Malaysia. In terms of output quantity, the company has managed to achieve a return to 1973 levels of production’ (p.62). The most substantial over-all consequence has not been in achieving productivity increases but in reducing state debt, and making the case for World Bank-demanded labour reforms imperative. If at the same time, greater space was opened for a local productive bourgeoisie, there is neither evidence nor discussion of the class’s presence in this collection. All that appears is a vision of capitalist development unattached to the existence of any possible developers. For Mozambique at least the age of non-development appears to have some further time to run.

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What Do We Learn from African History?


Violence and memory are important bricks in the construction of any history. All too often they endlessly perpetuate each other through the centuries, to assure the pride of the powerful and to be the cause of endless misery for the masses. This complex book makes a significant contribution to our understanding of conflict in any region of the world as well as providing us with a vivid insight into the sources and consequences of conflict in the Shangani region in South-Western Zimbabwe. Its complexity makes it difficult to do it justice. For one thing it is an important contribution both to African History and to Historiography and could even be regarded as a contribution to African Anthropology and Anthropological methodology. As a book about violence, written in a time of violence in Zimbabwe, it is an interesting exercise in the sociology of knowledge. Its importance is not however in doubt.

While almost all readers will take away something from the book it has to be said that it is not easy reading. It is not first of all for those with failing eyesight. The four publishing houses responsible have published the volume in a ridiculously small 9/10 point Palatino font. While this has undoubtedly reduced the size of the book in pages, it has actually increased its “existential” size for most readers. In the second place readers without a reasonably detailed knowledge of Zimbabwean – Rhodesian history will possibly find it quite difficult to navigate the detailed argument in each of the substantive chapters. The book consists of two parts. The first is on “Conquest, Eviction and Nationalism”, the second on “Wars and their Legacies”. The final chapter, “Resolving the Legacies of War – Accountability, Commemoration and Cleansing” is both a conclusion to, and a commentary on, the book as a whole. My suggestion to readers approaching the volume for the first time would be to read this final chapter in conjunction with the introduction before moving to the narrative itself.

The first part of the book explores the African experience of white settler colonialism in Matabeleland and the subsequent rise of the nationalist response
with its violent progression to guerrilla war. It is a harrowing tale. It provides us with a detailed account of the consequences of the brutalisation and the objectification of colonial subjects under settler colonialism. My one disappointment with this section was that despite the use of so many oral history informants, not enough attention was given to the symbolic violence of the state. As Franz Fanon pointed out half a century ago, by ignoring the local knowledge, wisdom and the local reality as perceived by the people themselves the settler state commits a psychic violence that symbolically intensifies the physical brutalisation resulting in important long term consequences. Of course the dominant experience of the subject peoples here was that of the administrative and real physical violence that they experienced. Yet in terms of the memory explored in this volume I believe a more comprehensive argument could have been more explicitly made. This is especially so in relation to the official agricultural policies and land husbandry policies of the 1950s and 1960s discussed in chapter three.

The second part of the book is on “Wars and their Legacies”. The first two chapters detail the African nationalist struggle, especially as it manifested itself in armed struggle through a guerrilla insurgency from 1976 to 1979. In particular it is the study of ZIPRA, which was the armed wing of the political party ZAPU. The account is drawn primarily on the testimony of guerrillas and civilians as it explores the complex relationship between local and nationalist struggles and the relationship between the guerrillas and civilians. The two following chapters explore the violence that erupted after African independence for Zimbabwe had been achieved. This is a shameful and complex chapter in Zimbabwean history and the account here is quite persuasive although I am sure that there will be readers with detailed local knowledge who will judge some of the accounts differently.

The penultimate chapter explores the “Politics of Development after Unity” which for this reviewer reveals the difficulties of an ambitious political project such as this. All the key terms “politics”, “development” and “unity” are problematic in the way in which they are used here. It seems to me that used uncritically they certainly do not actually help to clarify the complex situation under analysis. By attempting too much detail about a disadvantaged local area, in a disadvantaged region, in a nation becoming politically fractured in an international environment where global capitalism is imposing destructive economic policies on countries like Zimbabwe, the real politics of social change choices get lost. Although it would not have been in keeping with the framework of the book one or two simpler case studies could have explored the contradictions more effectively.

The final chapter on “Resolving the Legacies of War” is a valuable contribution in the way it raises the question of how we approach political and social consciousness in the contemporary world. This important chapter deserves detailed study by any scholar interested in these problems. My only negative comment is that here, and in the book as a whole, the concept of “ideology” is never utilized. Surely in a book focussing on historical memory the sociological concept would have helped clarify some of the underlying issues being explored in this innovative historical approach.

The historical method of the historians involved is indeed quite innovative. The approach breaks new ground in that it rests on the teamwork on the one hand of three experienced historians, working in collaboration with on the other hand a large team of local men and women. They have combined oral and archival historical research to achieve an impressively detailed and rigorous account. As they put it in their introduction, “And we have seen the way in which oral testimony has been shaped by the moment of recall in [the period of research] in the 1990s. This has produced a tension in the book, stemming from our use of the 1990s recollections both as ‘memory’ and as evidence in historical reconstruction. In the course of our narrative, we have tried to be sensitive to – indeed, explicitly to discuss – the influence of the present on the oral histories we collected” (p.2). The cost, or, downside, of their approach is that a complex history becomes even more complex in telling it from so many different angles. It is not a book for those wanting a good African story with a clear story line.

Professor Terry Ranger has been at the forefront of innovation in African historiography for over 40 years. As always his creative hand is evident here. Together with his collaborators he has given us a new way of looking at the connections between the local and the global, between personal memory and collective belief and action. The sad part is that as this trio of scholars were researching this account from the University of Zimbabwe, the modern state of Zimbabwe was descending into an era of political arrogance and violence. A period that was eerily similar to that, in the state of Rhodesia, when Terry Ranger was researching and publishing his early accounts on the wars of African resistance in the late nineteenth century at the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (UCRN) in the 1960s.

This situation causes a somewhat depressed and cynical reviewer, who was at the UCRN in those earlier days, to ask if any of the social and historical research on Africa over these past 50 years has done anything to lessen the misery and suffering of ordinary Africans. That is to ask a similar question to the one Gavin Kitching raised about the point of African Studies in a recent
number of the Review. In addition for myself there were emotional difficulties in reviewing this book. It tells a story that brings back painful memories of a wonderful friend from the Shangani area who went on to engage in the violent struggle to liberate Zimbabwe but who was then liquidated by the winners in the “liberation” struggle. When will we ever learn? When will we ever learn.

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Asante Women in Early Colonial Ghana


This volume is one of the most recent in what is now a very impressive list of publications on women in Africa, so much so that there is now a substantial historiography in this field. Like many recent historians, the authors argue for a clear connection between shifts in the mode and means of production and the life experiences of women. While they also explore the impact of the Christian missions on gender relations, their emphasis is on a materialist explanation for historical change.

In the pre-colonial period, Asante women lived in a matriarchal society, they had access to their own land, and divorce was easy. They were largely economically independent of their husbands and were actively engaged in the busy markets throughout Asante before the 1880s. The authors trace the gradual erosion of this economic and social structure, which was radically transformed when the production of cocoa was introduced. Although they recognize that so-called Custom and Tradition was always in a process of change, the emphasis here is on the impact of cash crops, and cocoa in particular, in the pre-colonial and colonial period in the first decades of the 20th century.

In 1908, slavery and pawnage were officially abolished and women were increasingly needed as labour on cocoa farms owned by their husbands. The production of cocoa undermined the fluid labor relations of the earlier period and the reciprocity characteristic of marriage relations. The women increasingly lost their independent control of land holdings and had difficulty persuading their husbands to provide adequate support for children. They had less time to spend growing food crops and became more and more economically dependent while their work burdens increased. These patterns were compounded by the operations of Christian churches. Education was introduced and children had to pay school fees. The missions also promoted the idea of the Father and his rights in the patriarchal family, ideas which were bolstered over time by the Native Courts which grew up under the system of Indirect Rule.

The authors claim that the history of Asante women not only fills an obvious gap in the historiographical record but also defies the prevailing meta-narrative of Asante history. This history of changes in marriage and child rearing patterns for the first three decades of the twentieth century relies on the notions of generational and life-cycle change to explore the ways in which Asante women were shaped by the colonial world. I would have liked to see more detailed analysis of the economic effects of banning slavery and pawnage especially as it related to the increasing work loads of women. However, the authors provide a persuasive account that colonialism impacted differently on men and women and that the nature of these cultural changes must be sought through an analysis of the connections between economic change and gender relations.

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From Democracy to Dictatorship in Ghana: the View from Below


Ghana, famously, was the first African state to achieve independence from colonial rule. Kwame Nkrumah and his Convention Peoples’ Party (CPP) were revolutionaries who excited the adulation of many Ghanaians, and the admiration of many academics, including the young Richard Rathbone. But by 1960, only three years after Independence, Ghana had become a model for the rest of Africa of a rather different type. It was well on the way to becoming a single-party dictatorship; or more properly, an authoritarian patrimonial regime.
which manipulated its electoral, legal and coercive machinery to reward Nkrumah’s supporters and intimidate his opponents.

This descent into authoritarianism is graphically illustrated and elucidated by Rathbone’s focus on the way in which the CPP dealt with recalcitrant chiefs, and with the institution of chieftaincy. In the process, chieftaincy was transformed from being the core institutional basis for local autonomy, into an instrument of central control. Rathbone’s success is to tell the story of local factional politics in 1950s Ghana (which might otherwise be fascinating to the researcher but of limited interest to others), by examining it through this prism of chieftaincy, which became one of the main battle grounds in the clash between political parties. Thereby, the battle amplified, to encompass tensions between families and villages, elders and young men, tradition and modernity, ethnicity and nationalism.

African nationalist movements were revolutionary not only in their opposition to colonial rule but also in their claim that they would modernise their own societies. The rhetoric is well-known. If modernisation was good, then tradition was bad; and if African nationalism was good, then tribalism was bad. When the CPP launched its campaign against the institution of chieftaincy in southern Ghana, it claimed that it was promoting modernisation and national unity. The reality which Rathbone examines shows beyond doubt that its goals were those of political and personal advantage. Nkrumah began his attack on chieftaincy as a means of defeating those local level factions who were voting against his government in 1954 and 1956. It is ironic that his very success in turning chieftaincy into an arm of government was to exacerbate the disruption and disunity of local communities, and to further inhibit local amenity development; so that the pro-CPP factions themselves became disillusioned and support for Nkrumah eroded.

The book deals mainly with the Ashanti Region of Ghana, with many of the examples taken from the chieftdom of Akyem Abuakwa. But the story it tells is one which applies throughout southern Ghana; not just to the Akan-speaking areas to which Rathbone refers, but also Ghana’s ‘eastern marches’, the Ewe-speaking areas which had also adopted Akan chieftaincy practices and forms. This story begins with the upsurge of chieftaincy disputes which accompanied the implementation of colonial administration in the early 20th century. The fluidity of traditional practice provided ample ammunition for rival chieftaincy claimants to manipulate a colonial administration convinced that there was one definitive, static tradition. The solution to the ensuing local upheavals was the replacement of the chiefs’ ‘native authorities’ and ‘native courts’ by modern Local Councils and magistrates courts. But Rathbone shows how both these modernising reforms themselves became victims to the CPP’s involvement in local factional politics. As national politics became localised, and local disputes nationalised, the focus shifted to the CPP’s efforts to defeat the political parties which opposed it, most notably the Ashanti-based National Liberation Movement. The CPP depicted Ashanti support for political opposition as divisive Asante tribalism, and the Ashantehene’s (Ashanti paramount chief’s) support for the NLM as a traditionally illegitimate ‘involvement in politics’. Rathbone’s account of the ruthlessness, pettiness and arbitrariness of the CPP’s resultant interference in local politics is fascinating. It was this very localisation and personalisation of authoritarian rule which constituted its most effective ‘divide and rule’ strategy; isolating and intimidating its opponents, or cowing them, as with the Asantehene, into humiliating uvolas of support.

Rathbone concludes by pondering a problem. How is it that chieftaincy is alive and well in contemporary Ghana, despite having been smashed by Nkrumah? The answer might well be that chieftaincy is important for Ghanaians for the same reason that it is important for the author. It provides an institution and a myth which links the specifics of family and locality, to the dramas of ethnicity and nation-state. The book is a pleasure to read.

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The Evolution of Colonial Accra


Making the Town is an outstanding piece of scholarship, constructed with the art of a storyteller, its complex and many-layered text weaving together changing Ga values, institutions and perceptions within the context of the evolution colonial city of Accra. The principal focus is the period from the mid-nineteenth century, when the Ga were in the transition from a slave trading economy, to the late 1920s, by which time the Ga townships had become subsumed within the urban complex of colonial Accra.

Parker underpins his main exposition with a detailed framework of pre-
colonial Ga society and politics as it evolved over two previous centuries of contact with a range of European and other African cultures prior to British colonial rule. In the process he executes a major critique and re-evaluation of Margaret Field’s pioneering studies of the Ga.

Clearly indebted to earlier classics, such as Abner Cohen’s analysis of the Hausa in Ibadan and Banton’s study of Freetown, as well as the work of Clair Robertson, Parker nevertheless takes urban studies in Africa to a new dimension in the extent to which he has teased out Ga institutions and motivations in their shaping of Accra. The older bifurcated historiography of indigenous towns versus colonial cities is overturned. The emphasis is on cultural continuities and Ga agency in shaping the growing metropolis. And it was a metropolis, with complex interactions and activities. The tensions between the various Ga traditional factions in what became Accra, between the chiefs and *asafo* regiments, between town and country, as well as the assertions and aspirations of the emerging Afro-European Westernised elites, the role of slaves and women, along with the efforts by British officials to impose their stamp on society, are treated with subtlety and detail. He manages to keep the complex mixture bubbling along when it could all too easily degenerate into confusion, which was clearly the response of successive British colonial officials.

The study moves well beyond the realm of politics and economies to document the role of religious innovations and legal institutions as instruments of continuity, change and adaptation. Parker demonstrates how the decline of warfare, and its role as an institution of social mobility and incorporation in the latter part of the nineteenth century, was supplanted by commerce and religious institutions. The power and influence of Ga middlemen in the politics of Accra declined on the one hand under the growing hegemony of European trading firms, changing the landscape of municipal politics. On the other hand, traditional religious beliefs and the influence of female mediums effectively held their own against the European missionaries and the western-educated African elite.

The increasingly complex layering of Accra society and the constant struggle by Ga leaders to retain control and prestige is captured in stories, such as “Braimah the Butcher Affair”. Parker uses the latter as the vehicle for an exposition on the relations between the Ga, the Muslim ‘Hausa’, originally returned slaves from Brazil, and the challenge by the Yoruba Muslim butcher, Braimah, initially for leadership of the Muslim community but ultimately for leadership of Accra; and of the involvement of the British colonial authorities in the struggle over succession to one of the principal Ga stools and their reformulation of customary law in the process.

By the end of the 1920s, the three old Ga townships had been subsumed within the growing British colonial capital of greater Accra and the Ga ‘fathers of the town’ had lost much of their previous power and influence. The British were never able to resolve the contradictions of indirect rule through Ga institutions with their image of Accra as the colonial capital. Yet, while Ga ceased to set the norms for incorporation of ‘strangers’ into urban life, Ga institutions weathered change, adopted and continue to impart much of the ‘African’ character to Accra’s urban culture. The contestations over the nature of Ga identity and values in the 1920s, as much as the power struggles over political office, were central to the nature of the urban society that evolved, crucial to an understanding of Ga agency in the face of colonialism and in the processes of interaction with a changing world.

Scholars of early colonial Africa and the period of transition to colonial rule, as well as those interested in the processes of urbanisation and cultural innovation, will find this a worthy addition to the library, as will any historian or social scientist who likes a well crafted and erudite text. The complexities of Ga socio-polity are intimidating, but Parker does fashion his tale into a good read. I warmly recommend it.

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**Spirit Possession Cults in Contemporary Africa**


This edited collection of ten chapters on spirit possession reveals just how rich, fascinating and important the topic is to understanding a range of issues around power, belief and health in contemporary African societies. The chapters are grouped in four sections: Spirit Possession and Modernity; Complexities and Proliferation of Spirit Possession; Spirit Possession and Gender; Spirit Possession as Performative Ethnography and History ‘from
below’. These groupings are useful in identifying topic areas but do not differentiate analytical approaches.

What makes this collection so appealing is the ethnographic and historical detail on which all contributors draw. The diversity of the contexts of spirit possession presented here highlight the limitations of the dominant anthropological paradigm of spirit possession as ‘a marginal experience the religion of the weak and powerless’ in the seminal works of L.M. Lewis (p.4), as is noted by several of the authors. In these accounts there is an analytical shift from this functionalist towards symbolic and cultural approaches.

The most comprehensive theoretical overview of spirit possession is presented by Tobias Wendt in ‘Slavery, Spirit Possession and Ritual Consciousness’. Wendt develops a discourse theory approach and explores text, performance and rules for assembling meaning. He notes how sociological approaches have focused on studying spirit possession as machinery for social exclusion and ritual compensation and feminist theory on possession cults as an expression of women’s culture. The problem with functionalist approaches, he argues, is that the possession cults can fulfil a multiplicity of functions at the same time to the extent of even cancelling each other out. ‘They serve as therapy, as entertainment, as social criticism, as art, as a means to differentiate oneself from one’s society, and sometimes even as a form of performative ethnography’ (p.120).

A major theme in these chapters is the historical significance of the dead in anchoring and defining contemporary identity. The dead, in the form of spirits, allow a fluid and changing connection and perspective on the present. Invariably the cults address situations where people are seeking help and advice to act in moments of personal distress and/or illness and in contexts of chaos produced by social dislocation through marginalisation, rapid change and war. Possession cults are used as a vehicle to connect individuals to different pasts in order to reshape the present. Wendt tells us that possession cults (Tchamba) among the Mina of Togo were a vehicle for slaves to be recovered from their social exclusion from social tradition and memory through their burial beyond the village limits. Through the return of some slaves as ‘spirits’ there was a demand to re-enter through the society’s ritual consciousness. ‘Possession cults may, under certain circumstances, serve to challenge and correct a people’s mainstream historical tradition, thus constituting and articulating a kind of ritual consciousness that tries to fill in the lacks of the historical consciousness’ (p.121).

Along similar lines Matthias Krings in the chapter ‘On History and language of the “European” Bori Spirits’ provides a fascinating genealogy of ‘European spirits’ in Kano, Northern Nigeria. These new spirits emerged as part of the local cults in the Hauka movement in 1925 and Krings documents the way spirit possession cults became politicised and split, even leading to the imprisonment of the new Hauka cult members. He describes the spirit genealogies as undergoing transformation; ‘they are becoming spirits of African descent who have adopted European manners and customs. Thus the gestalt of the Tarawa spirits today combines the mimetic interpretation of the other, the ‘European’ culture, with the reflection on the self, the Northern-Nigerian culture and its later history’ (p.65).

Not only can the emergence of possession cults and spirits create new cultural discourses and identities, they may do this through a division of labour in attending to local and translocal worlds. Ute Luig in ‘Constructing Local Worlds: Spirit Possession in the Gwembe Valley, Zambia’ distinguishes between the basanga and masabe cults in which the leaders of the former defend their local world by limiting outside influences, while the latter seek ‘to absorb and accumulate new ideas, objects and methods to empower themselves’ (p.137). Luig argues that they represent different ways of managing the transformation of local worlds. The basanga draw on traditional culture and identity while the masabe are expansionist and competitive alongside the growing number of Christian churches, sects and cults in the valley. However the latter, he argues, are limited because their focus on individual healing (e.g. exorcisms) and Christian eschatological discourses limits their ability to explain the world in terms of Tog cultural identity.

Linda Giles in the chapter ‘Spirit Possession and the Symbolic Construction of Swahili Society’ argues that possession cults act as a medium for creating cultural texts; stories that the society tells about itself. In the Swahili coastal area in East Africa ‘the symbolic expression of cultural identity and historical consciousness lies at the heart of possession’ (p.143). Swahili texts express not simply a limited number of basic cultural themes and contradictions but also diverse and often contradictory elements. The Swahili spirit ceremonies are divided between the dhikri (Islamic) and ngoma (non-Islamic). They produce ‘multiple texts’ and encompass the socio-cultural universe of Swahili society throughout its history, defining both self and other, present and past’ (p.159). Moreover each cult performance provides an opportunity for the interpretation of Swahili history and identity.

The relationship between killing and healing is most dramatically covered in an analysis of the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (HSMF) of Alice Lankena which emerged during the war in Uganda (1986-94). Heike Behrend contextualises this spirit possession cult within the context of Acholi, Northern Uganda, where
the power of the jogi is deeply ambivalent and is used for healing and killing. In pre-colonial times chiefs used the power of jok to advance the well-being and fertility of the land and its people, or to wage war against neighbouring chieftains. Behrend’s chapter is presented as a study of religious pluralism, power struggles and the construction of difference. The HSMF represented an attempt to morally rehabilitate soldiers who had become parasitic on Acholi peasants. Alice Lakwena used an indigenised Christian discourse borrowed from Christian spirit mediums. She claimed there were 140,000 spirits fighting in the HSMF forming the ‘spiritual forces’ of the movement. They included foreign spirits, one ‘Italian’ (papal?) spirit who conveyed Christian morality. After Alice’s defeat in war her father assumed the leadership of a new cult. While he continued the war he gave greater emphasis to healing and cleansing people. Health care had totally collapsed during the war and the spirits turned to providing recipes for medicines – ‘Holy Spirit drugs’ – which were supposed to heal all kinds of problems, including AIDS. Behrend observes that after Alice’s HSMF failed to heal by reconstituting a moral order, the successor movements turned the jok into killers. ‘Thus, the Christian spirits’ attempt to create a new moral space without witchcraft and sorcery failed’ (p.31).

This collection reveals the continuing significance of spirit possession cults in many parts of Africa. It also demonstrates the cultural vitality of people trying to construct meaning in worlds undergoing rapid transformation. The ambivalence of spirits who can kill and heal reflects the larger political dilemmas of states that modernity and development promised would also be able to protect and heal.

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Youth Gangs in Pre-1976 Soweto


Clive Glaser here takes his MA and PhD theses and gives us a narrative of the youth gangs of Soweto in the critical thirty years before the Uprising of

1976 erupted on the streets of this, perhaps the most problematic and socially complex of all South Africa’s many black townships. With two exceptions, the work is structured around a series of chapter titles formed from quotations: “Being Manly”, themes in the history of urban youth gangs’ or “1976 stopped all our fun”; Soweto gangs and the rise of student politics, 1970-1976,” which seem to take us inside the experience of being young and male in pre-1976 Soweto. It would have been interesting and useful to know from whom these quotations came, and under what circumstances they were made.

The textual research clearly has been assiduous, the primary and secondary sources completely deployed to construct a descriptive narrative of the place and the times. Some of the oral interviews were conducted by the author, others by a research assistant (and yet others are drawn from various archives). The work is located, although briefly, in a literature of subcultural style, territoriality and masculinity, and grounded in the “surprisingly substantial” [p.12] archives of the Johannesburg Non-European Affairs Department and other instrumentalities of government, as well as newspapers and magazines.

The author has searched out minute details of tsotsi life, describing varying styles and presentations of self engaged in by tsotsi at different times and in different places within the township. These accretive details add up to a remarkable record of tsotsi life and, in particular, of the surface representations of being a tsotsi. Yet, somehow, despite the author’s acknowledgement of the differing characteristics of both individual gangs and the widely-differing immediate localities out of which they grew and within which they operated, there persists a sense of that very homogeneity in the historical literature on South African youth (p.10) against which he warns. “Soweto”, for example, is frequently used as an umbrella descriptor where the analysis might well have benefited from a more discrete reading of the sources, teasing out the differences between the social environment in Zola, as opposed to Naledi, or Mzimahlo as against Meadowlands, Mofolo North as against Mofolo or Dube, or even Orlando East and Orlando West. Those distinctions were, and remain, crucial for people across the township, possessing descriptive power, defining and explaining the complexities of the social relationships of the youth, and their impacts on their families and their neighbourhoods.

Another source of explanatory material for people living in Soweto was, and is, the tension inherent in the segregationist/apartheid project which was the construction of Soweto itself; the tension between the homogeneity implied by relocating millions of black South Africans into one huge yet bounded township area, regardless of their geographical origins, but then forming discrete areas within the township into which people would be allocated according to their
Empowering Women in Uganda


Tripp describes her comprehensive volume as "a study of one of the central dilemmas in African politics: state limits on societal autonomy." (p.1) However her book will appeal to a wider audience than just African political analysts, as the case studies she presents and the scenarios she examines resonate with gender dilemmas faced by women globally. Nonetheless, Uganda is perhaps unique since, as Tripp's work demonstrates, unlike so many other examples Ugandan women's associations have maintained a degree of autonomy and independence from the state. Additionally, as discussed in chapter three, the women's movement retains a higher level of autonomy from the government than other sectors within Ugandan society, allowing for greater almentation overall. The ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM), unlike other regimes elsewhere, has also been instrumental in the development of the Ugandan women's movement. It has pursued a strong program of institution-building whilst simultaneously, and more significantly, responding to the protests and issues raised by the women's movement. This in itself is a truly remarkable feat if we consider the suppression and manipulation of women's movements and interests by the governments of Nigeria, Sudan, Eritrea, and India, to name but a few examples.

There is another angle to Tripp's work that is pertinent when examining the success of the Ugandan women's movement. Tripp argues that successful dissent from the state occurs, in the Ugandan context, when "women's organizations have worked to include a broad cross-section of women irrespective of their ethnic, clan, religious and other backgrounds." (p.8) Indeed there is a great deal to be said for this approach to female mobilisation and empowerment. There is always however the danger of exclusion in such processes. Broad spectrum unity can be disempowering to some groups, which is an issue not unlike the critique raised by commentators such as Walker Connor in relation to ethnicity.1 For example the prominent post-Apartheid South African women's movement – the Women's National Coalition (WNC) – is renowned for its unification of broad groups that would otherwise differ

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ethnically, religiously and socio-economically. However there are accounts of other movements such as Women in Nigeria (WIN) within which certain groups receive less or remain remote from core levels of power. This is not to argue that such developments are inevitable or that they are rampant in Uganda. Rather, it is to note how important are the dangers of homogenisation when we examine a situation such as Uganda.

Women and Politics in Uganda is a fresh examination of gender relations in Africa and a renewed look, in no sense naively undertaken, at the power of associations and civil society generally. Tripp is well aware that "expanding female representation is insufficient to serve women’s interests adequately as long as institutions are configured in ways that continue to suppress the expression of those interests." (p. 216) The result is a masterful study, thoroughly researched and elegantly composed. It will, no doubt, have great application not only within African studies but within the broader field of gender studies as well.

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Women Writers in Francophone Africa


Several overviews have now appeared of the growing contribution to African literature by women in the francophone West African countries. Most of these seem preoccupied by "voice", by the very fact that these women should be writing at all. The (usually Western) writers often begin their texts with a catalogue of reasons why francophone women took so long to emerge. Nicki Hitchcott is no exception. In this clearly written collection of essays on selected


women writers, she moves from the starting point that women in Africa are now "writ(ing) that which must not be spoken" (p 153), using the metaphor of voice to hold her book together – from ‘Unheard Voices’ to ‘Speaking Selves’. The important point is made, however, that apart from factors which may have prevented women from writing (or speaking, as the terms are frequently used interchangeably), they were also often ignored (or silenced) even when they were not silent in the past. This is significant, as it reminds us that not only have women in francophone African for years been producing texts or preserving the history of their people through their role as griots, but also that changes in context have a real effect on women’s lives. These ‘voices’ did not spring from nothing, and they must be placed in their socio-cultural, historical and political context. Hitchcott does acknowledge the importance of "situating the texts within their African context" (p 3), and is careful to avoid "social and literary imperialism" (p 6). However, somewhat disappointingly, her analyses contain little detail of the context of the texts she examines.

The strong points of the book are its accessibility, a remarkable trait in any literary studies today, and its application of current theory to a body of literature that is sometimes read in a patronising, simplistic way. It must be said that Hitchcott does tend to apply her "European feminism" (p 7) theory somewhat heavy handedly, finding feminism and women’s solidarity in the most unlikely places. At times, it seems that the texts are being used as vehicles after a conclusion has already been reached, one of the aims of the study, explicitly stated, is to "consider whether these women writers use literature as a means for raising and discussing feminist issues", and it would seem that this approach tends to emphasise feminist issues at the expense of other issues. But the analyses are well done, and very interesting. The book also has a good bibliography which would be useful to any student or researcher in the field.

The weak point of the collection is that it reads as just that – a collection of essays, and not a sustained argument. This is particularly the case early in the book, moving from the surprising inclusion of a chapter on romance novels (the Mills & Boon novels of the francophone world) to chapters on award-winning and highly complex authors, such as Mariama Bâ, Aminata Sow Fall and Calixthe Beyala.

A last quibble is with the title of the work (incidentally, I have yet to see an overview of “Male Writers in Francophone Africa” – or of “Female Writers in Francophone Europe”). In contrast to the blurb, which claims this is “the first comprehensive study of women’s writing in francophone sub-saharan Africa”, the book focuses only on a few key authors. This is not a problem in itself, but
perhaps the title could have been made to reflect that. One would hope that
now that francophone African women’s writing is becoming more of an
established field of study, that new research will focus more clearly on specific
aspects of their writing, or on specific authors or countries. This will help to
move the discipline away from overviews to the real time and study that it
merits – and this book is a valuable starting point.

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The Historiography of Empire

Anthony Kirk-Greene On Crown Service. A History of HM Colonial and

Heard of BAT and BIOT? They are the British Antarctic Territory and the
British Indian Ocean Territory, two of the residual thirteen fragments of
the British Empire. There are no discernible movements for independence in
any of the thirteen – not even in the more populous territories such as Bermuda
(Britain’s oldest colony) and Gibraltar. So it seems that even a post-imperial
Britain will always have some overseas territories to administer. But it will not
have a specialised administrative service to do the job. Britain’s Colonial
Service, under its post-1954 name of Her Majesty’s Overseas Civil Service
(HMOCS), ceased to exist on that rainy night in 1997 when the Union Jack
was lowered in Hong Kong. Two years later the social club of the service, the
Corona Club, was also wound up; even though some 20,000 former members of
HMOCS were still living at the end of the century the club itself had lost its
reason for being.

It was the Corona Club that commissioned Anthony Kirk-Greene to write this
history. He has written it with obvious affection for the organisation of which
he was once a member. Plainly he sees it as a dedicated service, in both senses
of the term: that is, as an organisation designed for a specific mission and as an
organisation employing men and women who were animated by a remarkably
strong ethic of service. In the later years of the Colonial Service/HMOCS most
of these people were technicians of various kinds – veterinarians, foresters,
agronomists, irrigators, engineers, tropical medicine specialists, nurses and so
on – all engaged in what came to be called ‘colonial development’. But it is the
administrative cadre that one thinks of as the classical Colonial Service. The
administrators were the visible agents of the British imperial system, and so
received a share of the opprobrium directed at imperialism – in scholarly
circles as well as political – in the nationalist and early post-colonial periods.
Since that time, Kirk-Greene believes, the historiographical wheel has begun
to turn, producing a more reflective and balanced view of the imperial era. For
the most part, he feels, the work of the Colonial Service/HMOCS emerges
from historical scrutiny with much credit. The thin white line not only
maintained law and order over vast terrains but did its utmost to teach, train
and ‘prepare’.

It may nevertheless be argued that when questions are raised about the long-
term effects of colonial administration (for history does tend to judge by
results), the answers must be ambivalent. Post-colonial governance in Africa
and elsewhere presents a diverse pattern of successes and failures, ranging all
the way from peaceful representative government to the catastrophe of the
collapsed state. There can be no sure way of separating out the influence of
colonial administration from the many other factors responsible for these
varied outcomes. But claims of success do need to be weighed against the
probability that in some cases the administrators implanted models, institutions
and practices that were culturally quite inappropriate, thus contributing to
dysfunctional outcomes.

Issues of this kind are hinted at but not explored in the book whose essential
achievement is rather that it retrieves for posterity something that is already
forgotten – how things seemed at the time to the people involved. In Britain, the
Colonial Service long ranked alongside the Indian Civil Service and the Home
Civil Service as a respected and much competed for career path for graduates
predominantly of the old universities (‘solid Seconds’ preferred). It also offered
adventure and high responsibility virtually from the moment of posting.
Remuneration was never high, so an ethic of service was indeed required. Kirk-
Greene brings these things out, and also does a fine job of narrating the broader
administrative history with its key turning points: Joseph Chamberlain’s
consolidation of the career service; the creation in 1930 of the unified service out
of what had been separate territory-based governments; the Colonial Develop-
ment and Welfare Acts which opened the way to the ‘second colonial occupation’
of the 1940s and early 1950s; and finally the increasingly desperate official
efforts to sustain a service suffering from demoralisation and high departure rates
as mass redundancy loomed. The book also offers a useful chronology and much
statistical information, including the detail that in the postwar decade 95 New
Zealanders and 80 Australians were among those recruited for service (two of the
New Zealanders rose all the way to the rank of governor).
The book is unusually organised. The narrative text comprises only its first half. Then comes a sweeping bibliographical essay listing about a thousand items, ranging from official reports through gubernatorial memoirs to the novels of Joyce Cary. Last come over a hundred pages of Colonial Service documents. Browsing in this final section soon dispels any fears that the documents might make for anodyne reading. In fact they are full of human interest. We learn of the arcane methods by which the recruiting board detected the prime desideratum of 'character' among applicants. We get a strong sense of the exigencies of the junior DO's life in remote postings. We are instructed in the finer points of colonial etiquette. And we Cavendish on the jovialities at the annual Corona Club dinners.

All this is obviously a history of administration as experienced by the administrators. Kirk-Greene rightly insists that the 'full story' cannot be written until there is a sufficient understanding, perhaps built on subaltern studies, of how the service was seen by those who were administered. But although this book may be a partial account (once again, in both senses of the term), it does its assigned task extremely well. A significant gap in the historiography of empire has been filled.

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Condensing History, Mutilating Maps, Reaching Readers


Scarecrow Press, with its 'African Historical Dictionaries' series and its more recent 'Area Bibliographies' series, is a prolific contributor to publishing in that area of African studies which seeks to condense a country's history into a compact reference guide. Many reviewers (such as David Henige, John McIlwaine and this reviewer) have with good reason criticized these series for uneven quality and exclusion of non-book materials. In this regard, the five volumes under review have their drawbacks. Yet they do marshal facts in an organized way of potential benefit to novice and teacher, if less so to the specialist. Recent trends in these series are towards bigger volumes, and the books reviewed certainly are more extensive and up-to-date.

Historian Kenneth Perkins has revised his 1989 work on Tunisia. Entries encompass Tunisia's history from Carthage to 1996. Arab-Islamic and French colonial periods are well treated, reflecting Perkins' specialization. Detailed chronologies and dynasty lists, and a less useful map, accompany the text. The bibliography covers only the twentieth century and (like all Scarecrow volumes) is not annotated. However, it is much enlarged (by seventy pages) and somewhat updated: the section on women includes ten new items, that on the media only five more. The author wisely has added some new categories, such as literature (though this is rather desultory). Much of the introduction and many dictionary entries remain untouched, suggesting a lazy approach to incorporating recent historiography, though sections on the economy have been adjusted. Perhaps eight years is too short a period for an update?

Daniel Miles McFarland's *Historical Dictionary of Upper Volta (Haute Volta)* appeared in 1978. The revised edition on Burkina Faso, updated by Lawrence Rupeley, appears twenty years later and is considerably (116 pages) larger; the bibliography is extended from 54 to 94 pages, reflecting growing scholarship, including now in English, on the country. Yet, as with the Tunisia volume, many of the entries remain unchanged: has scholarship on all these topics really stagnated, so as not to require updating? The introduction does include some new data on the economy but again many of its sections are unchanged. Still, this is an improvement on the first edition.

Eminent South African historian Christopher Saunders has revised his 1983 volume, teaming with Unisa historian Nicholas Southey and recruiting bibliographer Mary-Lynn Suttle to produce a considerably enlarged (by more than 100 pages) and updated work, fully-justified by the momentous events of 1990-4. David Philip in Cape Town previously published this text in 1998, minus the bibliography and with better maps. Scarecrow has a problem with maps! Maps in the Philip edition are clear; those in the US edition fuzzy, even mutilated; shading essential to determine boundaries has disappeared, rendering
a disservice to reader and authors. Nevertheless, this remains a very useful work. There are many new entries for places, peoples, and persons, not just for new figures but also for those from the past who have emerged from obscurity, such as Krotov, Abraham Esau, and Adam Kok. Some entries, such as “Khолов” and “Ethiopianism” have been deleted and others such as “Reserves” have been abridged, but it is not always clear why. Recent events have required extensive editing of some entries, such as political parties. Entries have not been copied in toto from the earlier edition but substantially re-written: that on the Mfecane is a good example of how to update in keeping with historiographical advances. The bibliography is well arranged and the compiler (who writes bibliographic updates for the South African Historical Journal) has kept well abreast of recent publications and made a balanced selection, though use of a rather esoteric heading “Edited Source Material” has distanced some items from more logical sections. Nigel Worden’s A Concise Dictionary of South African History (Cape Town, 1998) makes an interesting comparison. He attaches bibliographic references to each entry, a practice helpful to readers but not done in Scarecrow volumes—yet they are included in the Philip imprint. Different choices have been made. Worden has preferred “Pogo,” “Potgieter” and “Public History”; Saunders and Southey “Press” and “Potchefstroom.” The latter put the Pondoland Revolt from 1960-1; Worden 1958-60. Worden “explains” more, Saunders and Southey are more descriptive, though their lengthier entries are very informative, as are those on recent personalities (such as Cyril Ramaphosa—given a different date of birth in the two volumes).

The Historical Dictionary of Morocco by Thomas Park is a much enlarged (quadrupled) and improved revision of the 1980 edition by William Spencer—an entirely new work. Park, an anthropologist, has written extensively on economic history of 19th and 20th century Morocco. His entries are solid; that on anti-colonial fighter ‘Abd al-Karim is a model entry, covering the main points of his life and his significance in Moroccan history. The entry on Fès (Fez) encompasses the architecture and history of the modern and old city. The author deftly combines social and historical data, for instance in the entry on indigenous Imaizighan (“Berber”). The book has much useful data: appendices detail population, ruling chronologies, High Commissioners, dynasty genealogies, notes on libraries and archives in Europe and Morocco, and a glossary of Arabic and tamazight terms. An ambitious swag of thirty historical maps (most clearly reproduced, but a few occluded due to poor shading) is a boon to readers. There is a note on Arabic transliteration. The dictionary section is less than 200 (of 544) pages and the lion’s share of the book is given over to a bibliography of 3,500 entries, rich in Arabic, English and French citations. However, subjective choices limit the usability of this undoubtedly rich bibliography. Failure to italicize titles makes text hard to read. The purely alphabetic arrangement separates contiguous historical periods. Inconsistencies of name headings disperse entries and some serials lack details. The author uses his own in-house romanization, which may confuse some readers (see John McIlwaine, African Research and Documentation, 75, 1997, p.54). Subjectivity also is apparent in selection of entries and the arrangement. Human rights are covered but not labour or literature or significant writers such as Tahar Ben Jallou. One must look under “Green March” to find data on Western Sahara and there is no index to help. Park explains his choices, but joint authorship or standard arrangement could have rectified inconsistencies. There are some errors: Journal of African History is incorrectly given as starting in 1969 (it began 1960). However, for its coverage of basic historical dimensions, this is worth acquiring.

The Scarecrow Arca Bibliographies series aims to cover regions rather than nations and Hector Blackhurst, an experienced bibliographer (compiler of the annual Africa Bibliography) has put together a select list of 3,838 books covering Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. Categories (including region, country, persons, and subject) are arranged in a single E-Z format. This can make comprehensive searching by country unwieldy for the novice who, for instance, may not know to also look under “Nuba” for Sudanese peoples. However, once one understands the schema, it is easily used. To cover East and Northeast Africa in a single bibliography is ambitious and this attempt has been criticised for failing to cover the region as opposed to individual countries, for overlap with other works, and lack of depth (Barbara Tarfan, African Research and Documentation 75, 1997, p.58; David Anderson, Journal of African History 38 (3) 1997, p.533). Anderson also has criticized its restriction to post-1960 items and claimed it offers specialists little that cannot be found in Africana library web catalogues. One also can question the balance: of 31 entries on Kenyan history, 12 are by just two authors. There are less than three pages on Eritrea and Djibouti. The decision to omit literature is questionable: Ngugi’s political, but not literary works, are included yet he is chosen as one of very few biographical entries (one wonders why John Garang is excluded). Separate sections on “Colonial history” set apart from “History” can lead to casual readers missing items, especially when general histories also treating the former are placed in the latter. Notwithstanding these criticisms, many of the sections, notably those on peoples (reflecting the author’s anthropological interests) list core monographs, suggesting that this book may be a useful starting point for undergraduates or Masters’ students.

Despite imperfections, these five volumes all give succinct and useful, if at times subjective, surveys of national histories and a choice, if also subjective,
selection of further reading. If these updated editions go only part way in incorporating recent scholarship then this reflects the difficulty of a single author in covering the mushrooming, multidisciplinary output. The South African volume is the best in this regard, showing the value of teamwork and the publishers would do well to apply this principle to reduce subjectivity and allow greater specialization (I noted the same point in the volume on the Sudan, previously reviewed in this journal). They should also review their reproduction of maps and consider standardizing their series formats.

Finally, one might ask, are bibliographies obsolete? In fact, Internet resources make the compilation of bibliographies easier, if more open to verification. Many Scarecrow series are now available online to subscribers of schemes such as 'NetLibrary,' raising the possibility of these expensive works reaching more of the readers for whom they are intended.

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Research Matters

Australian Miners Embark on Community Consultation in Tanzania

This note is about a research project for which I am the lead consultant that has been set up in Tanzania by an Australian mining company to identify community needs and ways in which the company might contribute to their achievement. Miners and the mining industry have frequently been accused of damaging the environment and local communities and in many respects such criticism has been deserved; especially over the past few decades. Nowadays however enlightened self-interest is leading more mining companies to strive for good community relations in the areas surrounding their mining projects, whether in their home country or abroad. Clearly there are benefits to be gained from becoming good corporate citizens. The business benefits alone of an improved public image (with an attentive audience, composed of nongovernment organisations (NGOs) as well as shareholders and international monitoring bodies) are convincing intelligent companies to take up more environmental and social activities; while the current focus on 'triple bottom line' reporting in order to satisfy shareholder expectations of ethical operations is becoming a “given” for Australian companies with new projects whether in Australia or overseas.1 Community consultation (or ‘stakeholder’ engagement) in this environment is as a result rapidly becoming one of the fastest growing areas of importance for new and expanding minerals operations worldwide.

Active non-government organizations (NGOs) which monitor the minerals industry and whose influence should not be underestimated have in this situation invented new phrases such as ‘greenwashing’ to describe corporate efforts which they judge to be merely public relations programs. In other words, just talking about consultation is not enough and the mining industry as a whole is making efforts to engage meaningfully with the widest possible range of stakeholders, with NGOs being one of the most important community sectors to which it is reaching out.

Hence the project with which I am involved. As part of the Global Mining Initiative, The Australian Minerals and Energy Foundation (AMEEF) is

1 ‘Triple Bottom Line’ indicates the simultaneous pursuit of economic prosperity, environmental quality and social equity.
managing a project called Mining Minerals and Sustainable Development. The latter in turn commissioned a research project on Stakeholder Engagement, with the stated aim of finding "ways in which the industry and its stakeholders can engage to create the necessary conditions for change." The central tenet of the research proposal submitted for this project by my research team was that, in order to reach the middle ground desired by AMEEM, where stakeholders can engage in meaningful interaction to create change toward sustainable development, companies and industry bodies must be prepared to take to heart and to learn from NGO criticism. Dialogue is not however a one-way process. NGOs should also be prepared to try to understand the motivations of companies which are making efforts to improve their community relations performances. There will be groups at either end of the corporate-activist spectrum who cannot or will not be able to talk to each other. With mutual effort, however, there should be some middle ground for constructive exchange. The project, now underway, will include several public workshops where we hope beneficial discussions will take place.

Helping Miners to Identify Tanzanian Community

A practical example of how well-intentioned companies can learn how to engage more productively with their neighbouring communities was the project I worked on in Tanzania in the last quarter of 2000. I was working for a Perls-based gold mining company which has a gold mine in Nzega District in western Tanzania. Resolute had made many efforts to assist the poverty-stricken communities living in villages close to the mine’s perimeters. Company executives had witnessed the poor conditions in which people in the mine’s neighbouring communities lived and wanted to help them to improve their lives. Assistance programs included school reconstruction, provision of books and uniforms, the sinking of water wells, the planting of fruit trees, even the establishment of a biogas plant which utilised methane produced by cows. A lot of effort went into these projects and a lot of benefits were received by the villagers.

The company in this case undertook some unusual measures such as forging an alliance with Australian Volunteers International (AVI) to send volunteer teachers and a doctor to the Tanzanian communities. Their most significant groundbreaking step however was to realise that it was important not only to supply material assistance as donations; but that it would be more effective in the long-term if communities could be encouraged to empower themselves and take responsibility for their own development plans. The company would then be able to join in with community-motivated and initiated projects instead of trying to ascertain from outside what the communities needed. In addition, the development needs of the Nzega communities far exceed what a medium-sized publicly-listed company can provide without being accused of wasting shareholders’ money. Mining companies are not, after all, charity or development foundations.

The company hoped also to help the communities identify their own needs so that assistance from outside donors could be sought to help the communities fulfill their goals. For this reason they conducted a participatory community survey of the four communities closest to the mine’s perimeter – Isanga, Mwaluzwilo, Bujulu and Undomo. Participatory Rural Analysis (PRA) methods were used to encourage communities to develop their own Community Action Plans (CAPs). PRA methodology is widely accepted as a means of enabling communities to analyse their own problems and devise their own solutions, seeking outside assistance where needed. PRA methods have been adopted by the Tanzanian Government in its Local Government Reform initiative policy for the same reasons, i.e. development is more likely to succeed if people are taking charge of their own destiny, not waiting for instructions and donations from outside. The centralised and donor-driven policies of the past had largely destroyed communities’ sense of initiative and ability to act in their own behalf. Two highly-experienced Tanzanian PRA practitioners engaged through a Dar es Salaam based development consultancy worked with the company’s own community relations staff to conduct the CAP program.

Nzega District had not been included in either of the first two phases of the Tanzanian Local Government Reform process, and was therefore yet to receive much input in terms of community self-empowerment and PRA methods. For that reason, several district officials attended many of the PRA sessions conducted by the company-funded team, eager to learn new skills. More importantly, the community members themselves were delighted to be asked what they lacked and what they needed; and to be assisted to devise their own plans. Once they overcame their initial shyness with the unfamiliar process, we found that each community embraced the opportunity to develop a Community Action Plan (CAP) and put a great deal of effort into ensuring the project was completed. It was a great learning process for all of us and one which holds much promise for future development plans and initiatives.

\[1\] The Global Mining Initiative was launched by major mining companies as a campaign to move towards sustainable development in the mining sector. Although it is funded by mining companies and evidently receives a lot of input from them, it also has a life of its own and should not be dismissed as a mining company PR exercise. Taking advantage of opportunities to influence GMI outcomes would be more effective.
Methodology
The PRA team used research methods designed to assist the community groups in analysing their own situation and drawing up their own development plans.

Community Mapping: An ice-breaking exercise in which separate groups of men and women sketched out their community’s physical layout. Designed to start people recognising that they are the experts about their own community and to get discussion and co-operation going.

History: Helped people to think about where their community has come from and where it might be heading. Useful in that many of the younger people and newer arrivals had not heard about the community history before.

Trends Analysis: Asked people to consider how aspects of community life have changed for better or worse over extended time periods and how they might change in future.

Seasonal Calendar: Described busy work periods, celebration periods and times of plenty and scarcity in graphic form. Discussion encouraged people to make linkages between some of these occurrences, such as many months of celebration leading to hard times later. As this exercise was carried out in gender groups, it also highlighted a tendency for men to spend longer periods of time in celebration and less in work than women.

Gender Daily Calendar: Very useful for initiating discussions of women’s heavy workloads and the different responsibilities of different family members.

Institutional Ranking: Vital for discovering which groups in the community are viable and respected.

Problem Identification: This process led to some of the liveliest debates and in every community there were strong arguments about whether poor health or poor education was the greatest community problem. In some communities, after heated discussions involving a wide range of participants and a vote, education won. In Bujulu, water shortage was ranked the most serious problem and then education.

Options Assessment: The CAP team of 10 to 12 people, half each men and women, elected by each community, carried out this assessment. The representatives were asked to assign points to each of the opportunities which had been identified for dealing with each problem, using criteria of cost, the need for outside input and how widespread benefits would be within the community.

Development of the CAP: This and the options assessment process were long and involved processes, requiring at least two full-time workdays from the CAP team members. In all four communities involved the community representatives participated fully for as long as was needed, a truly major effort.

Participation
In each of the four communities, gatherings of more than 100 people discussed and agreed to the Community Action Plan and also participated in some of the earlier group exercises. This broad-based community participation gave the PRA team confidence that, with the right support and guidance, these four communities will take action to implement their plans. Representatives of all communities presented their CAPs to the District Councillors, the Regional Administrative Secretary and District Officials on 12 December in Nzega town. Although officials were on the defensive about criticism by community members for not providing sufficient support and extension services, the community representatives stood their ground and insisted on being heard. This was an excellent launch to the implementation process and augurs well for future progress. The process of participatory planning was arduous and often very slow. It was also invigorating. Witnessing communities who had never before even been asked what they wanted grasp the opportunity to take charge of their own planning procedures was inspirational. Predictions by outsiders that these communities would not be interested in nor capable of devising their own plans were shown to be completely incorrect. Given the external support that they need, I hope that these four communities will be able to achieve their goals and perhaps even become an example for others to follow.

It should be noted that the CAPs are very long documents. The lists of projects requiring external funding which have been extracted from the CAPs, such as the example from Bujulu village (see table below), are much shorter. This attests to the way in which communities embraced the principles of self-empowerment and planned many projects which they will manage without donor assistance. All the more reason for donors to assist these communities when they do need help.

Conclusion:
Mining is undoubtedly an exploitative industry. The act of mining itself exploits the earth’s resources and companies can be exploitative towards the communities living near their projects. However, there is a trend toward responsive and responsible corporate behaviour by mining companies. Enhanced stakeholder engagement and community consultation processes of the kind described above are manifestations of this trend.

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## Bewitching Practice: Witches and Witchcraft in Langa, South Africa

*Jennifer Badstreubner*

I am presently completing my doctoral thesis on the above subject.

Witchcraft in the South African urban context has adapted to a significant array of modern conditions easily incorporating the nation state system, bureaucracy, the money economy, new power relations and consumer goods. There emerges a dynamic interpenetration of witchcraft and modern technologies as the witch, conceptually associated with tradition and separated from modernity, emerges as a key figure in the contact zones between global and local forces. The violence of witchcraft accusations, the murder of people accused, and the ritual murder for body parts used in witchcraft and sorcery have pushed the death toll of practices related to witchcraft into the thousands. It is therefore crucial to attempt to understand the forms witchcraft takes and the conditions under which it emerges as an explanatory model.

South African witchcraft narratives clearly engage with the new democracy weaving together devastating histories of Apartheid and colonialism and thus making an already arcane sense of the dislocation, alteration and adherence of traditional belief systems. The contextualisation of peoples’ encounter with witchcraft hinges upon the understanding that witchcraft is about the continuing power of human agency to imaginatively engage with a world that is rapidly expanding in cognitive dimensions yet anchored in a particular historical and socio-cultural place. Modern witchcraft is a complicated bricolage of erosion, adaptation and innovation of localised cosmologies fighting to comprehend and encompass changes brought by an expansive globalization driven by North American hegemonic practices.

The concept late modernity is a behemoth, unwieldy as a theoretical category and resistant to coherent and consistently relevant analysis. One of the ways around the beast is by focusing upon a particular set of engagements in a particular time and space with a particular group of people. My thesis is on bewitchment and treatment practices in an urban township in South Africa, but it is also about how people are engaging with the effects of globalization; how they make sense of themselves and their place in the post apartheid, democratic and capitalist orientated space of the ‘new’ South Africa.

The bulk of my fieldwork was conducted between 1999-2000 in the oldest and
one of the most well established townships in Cape Town, South Africa. As the majority of the people I worked with are Xhosa speakers the thesis will be mainly concerned with the conditions and phenomena of witchcraft as experienced by urban-based amaXhosa people. Much of the work was conducted with amagqirha or traditional healer/diviners. It is these associations that have shaped my thesis towards bewitchment rather than witchcraft accusations per se. Because witchcraft is not just about stories, an aim of this thesis is to explore how the embodied self interacts with mutually constitutive apparent and occult worlds; how witches affect social relationships and an individual’s mental and physical health. It is an interplay that incorporates the social space of urban life and the uncertainties inherent in late modernity.

The Comaroffs, writing on South African witchcraft, argue: “Reports of witchcraft must be situated on a restless terrain. The spectre of mystical violence run wild is a caricature of post-apartheid liberty: the liberty to transgress and consume in an unfettered world of desire, cut loose from former political, spatial, moral, sexual and material constraints.” Their approach typifies recent anthropological research into African witchcraft that conceptualizes witchcraft as a sign of rapid social change, expressly the changes wrought by late modernity and millennial capitalism. The linkage of witchcraft so exclusively to the forces of globalisation can lead to a reduction of witchcraft to a sign of the entity of globalisation. One of the ways around this coupelot is to historicise witchcraft practices. However, it is not enough to connect past conceptualisations of witchcraft with present concepts. There must also be a re-evaluation of the forms of colonial and apartheid history, to consider multiple histories. The more I think about witchcraft in South Africa the more I see the possibility of interrogating the unreal and magical dimensions of colonial and postcolonial power. This re-evaluation will include media discourse; the language of the nation-state and the form that research into witchcraft takes including anthropology. I see no reason not to extend the Comaroffs’ idea of a restless terrain much further: first to conceptualise colonial (and post-colonial) realities as part of an imaginary, as fragmented and fantastic as the various witchcraft narratives that emerged with them; and second identify how these conjunctions flow into present conditions. By setting witchcraft narratives and colonial and post colonial histories on this ‘restless terrain’ I want to work towards an unpacking of what Ann Stoller has called the hierarchies of credibility. This will lead hopefully, towards an innovative approach to an old subject.

Jennifer Badstreubner
Department of Archaeology and Anthropology
Australian National University
Canberra ACT 0200

Call for papers for The Uganda Journal

The Uganda Journal, which has been published since 1934, is an internationally recognised journal promoting research on all aspects of Uganda’s culture, history, natural history and archaeology. Available in most African Studies libraries around the world, The Uganda Journal is an important forum for intellectual exchange and debate about Uganda. The Editorial Board is currently inviting any articles, notes or book reviews for the 2001 edition. Contributors should submit work on a 3.5" diskette using Word Perfect (5.1 or higher) or Microsoft Word (6 or higher) and include two typed, hard copies (double spaced, single sided, A4 size). Full-length articles should not exceed 4,500 words; review articles or book reviews 2,000 words, and notes 1,000 words. Before sending manuscripts, please consult “Notes for Contributors” in a recent issue of the journal.

Professor David Kiyaga Mulindwa, Editor.
Address correspondence to: The Hon Editor, The Uganda Society, PO Box 4980, Kampala, Uganda. Email ncd@infocorn.co.ug

South African Archives

The National Archives of South Africa has put their databases of the contents of various archives repositories and collections on-line at http://www.national.archives.gov.za/ The site also has contact information for the various provincial archives, although these are not included in the on-line databases.


New Address for A-Z of African Studies

"An A-Z of African Studies on the Internet" (established 1995) has a new address: <http://www.lib.msu.edu/libm/a-z/az.html>

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Notes and News

Learning from Kenya: A Nursing Viewpoint

In December 2000 a team of student nurses from Curtin University of Technology in Western Australia left for three weeks in Nairobi, Kenya. This was our third study tour since 1997 and the major aim, in collaboration with the University of Nairobi, was to set up a health assessment clinic for street people. There are more than one hundred thousand people living on the streets in Nairobi. The homeless population ranges in age from infants to adults. Irrespective of age the group survives without social support and with limited access to medical services. They are a very vulnerable group and express anxiety, low self-esteem and hopelessness regarding their situation. Nursing interventions include first aid measures, health promotion strategies and linking this group to existing services.

The project provided valuable opportunities for Curtin nursing students: to build a cross-cultural exchange with Kenyan nurses; and in doing so to explore the causes of homelessness, to understand current health issues and common diseases in Kenya, to investigate the socioeconomic and political factors governing access to health care, and to carry out an integrated health assessment in a cross-cultural situation with an interpreter; to develop team skills through working with students from different semesters; and to compare health care facilities in Kenya and Australia. The team members were self funded. The Flora Hostel in 5th Ngong Road which other health professionals from many parts of the world often use as a base provided accommodation. Discussions between Kenyan and visiting nurses helped the latter to adopt their health history format to the local environment. Nursing nurses at the hostel also had fascinating experiences to share from their extensive knowledge and understanding of Kenya.

A three day health assessment workshop for student nurses, lecturers and midwives was set up at the Department of Nursing Sciences, opposite Kenyatta National Hospital. Curtin students participated by demonstrating the techniques and sometimes being a practice model for Kenyan nurses. Following the workshop the team had a tour of the hospital visiting all major

1 The total cost for each including airfares, transfers, accommodation, food, vaccinations and passport was approximately $A 3000.
specialities. The clinic itself took place in a house in the Parklands area which the Kenyans use for rehabilitation programs for homeless people. Rooms in the house were rearranged with blankets or sheets, string, pegs and safety pins to form cubicles. Tables normally used to teach cake decorating (a means to fund the rehabilitation programs) were used for examining clients. While most street people understand some English, Kiswahili is the common language in use and Kenyan field workers who brought street people to the house also acted as interpreters when necessary as Kenyan and Australian students worked together to take a health history for each person and to perform an integrated physical examination.

The students collected the health data and wrote up nursing diagnoses which were checked by the lecturer. Basic first aid and health teaching were provided using equipment and supplies donated by many hospitals in Perth, Western Australia. Where treatment required fell outside the scope of nursing staff, the street person was escorted to Kenyatta National Hospital for further assessment. This was often a lengthy process due to the large number of people waiting to be seen. Although students had been briefed in Perth about the usual health problems found amongst street people, many found the stories of the homeless affected them deeply. Some wept.

The team also visited Kianyaga Children’s Home at the foot of Mt Kenya where the students conducted health screening on children and stayed overnight. Some had brought tents with them, some slept on the dining room floor in sleeping bags. Each child was given a cloth bag of toys and toiletries for Christmas. The students and their friends in Perth made the bags and provided their contents. Watching sixty-five children’s faces lit up in the light of hurricane lamps in the early evening was incredible to behold. There were screams of delight from many who would never before have had a gift. All that could be seen in the darkness were eyes that got bigger and bigger and smiles that just kept growing. A further day and a half health assessment program was held at nearby Kianyaga for community health nurses before we headed back to Nairobi on the local matatu (bus).

Our students gained insights into the causes of homelessness, the psychological impact of being on the streets, the adaptation to illness, coping mechanisms used, the effects of loss and grief, the effect of the environment and the pathophysiology that is common to street people. They became very aware of the differences in culture, equity and access to health care, quality of health care, allocation of resources, ethics and the perceptions of the role of nurses and were able to compare and contrast health services in Australia and Kenya. Not all the time however was spent working! The group flew to Mombassa for one weekend, visited Karen Blixen’s house, the AFEW giraffe park, the Bomas of Kenya and the Nairobi Museum. Everyone went on safari to the Maasai Mara Game Park.

While the study tour was limited in time there have been a number of positive outcomes for the participants. Many of our students wish to return after graduation to work there and to contribute their skills to the large number of community clinics throughout the country. Nursing networks have been established and Kenyan staff and students have expressed interest in pursuing higher degrees at Curtin University; several have already enrolled. A formal link between the two universities has now been established. While the difficulties in setting up such a study tour continue, with poor communications being one of the biggest factors, the students’ enthusiasm never seems to diminish. Few knew their fellow students prior to the trip but all worked very effectively together. Each had skills that enhanced the overall functioning of the team. They were compassionate and generous. While each group I have taken to Kenya has been very different, all have brought nothing but credit to Curtin University and their profession. Many who were unsure of their career choice before travelling to Kenya return with a fiery passion. For me, this has been the biggest reason to continue. We learned a great deal!

Lorraine Brown  
School of Nursing and Midwifery  
Curtin University of Technology  
Bentley WA

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Working with Dopstop: Alcohol Problems in the Western Cape, South Africa

As part of the AusAID-funded South African Capacity-building Program, a small NGO working out of Stellenbosch, South Africa obtained funds for some input from Australia on the issue of problem drinking. The NGO is the Dopstop Association¹, named after the ‘dop system’ in which farm workers were given alcohol as part of their remuneration, or as a ‘benefit’ of their employment. This institutionalised a massive alcohol consumption problem associated with injury and illness, and compounds the poor working and living

¹ Dopstop Association: Stellenbosch, PO Box 2044, Dennesig, 7601, South Africa.
conditions of many of these labourers. Despite its official prohibition, ‘dop’ continues in various forms, usually through the disposal of cheap wine to workers on Friday evenings. Behind the glossy brochures promoting the fine wines of the Stellenbosch region is a situation where many wineries still provide this low-grade wine in large silver bladders known as papsakke which are ubiquitous throughout the Western Cape.

The Dopstop Association was formed in 1997 to work towards eliminating the ‘dop’ system and its legacy: the adverse effects of alcohol abuse on farms. Dopstop tries to liaise with representatives of the industry and the farmers as well, in order to involve them in the well-being of their workers. The organisation employs two full-time workers (with offices in a clinic in Stellenbosch), and brings together local service providers (such as mobile clinic nurses), NGOs (such as Women on Farms), farmers, and universities (including the Public Health Program of the University of the Western Cape, and the Department of Community Health at the University of Cape Town). Through these linkages the organisation has had research support from PhD students in anthropology and health (who have undertaken their fieldwork in the region), and from experienced medical researchers (who have organised a household survey on environmental health).

What the organisation lacked was some specific input on community based strategies and ideas on local policies and prevention on alcohol. University participants in Dopstop had heard about innovative programs for Aboriginal people in Australia, such as the Living with Alcohol program in the Northern Territory, and proposed some technical assistance from this country. My background is in anthropology, with a focus on substance misuse problems among Indigenous Australians in remote and rural areas. Over the years I have worked with a number of community-based organisations on ways of managing alcohol problems, and collecting local data to support harm reduction initiatives such as restrictions over supply. In the mid-1990s I worked on a book of practical ideas and strategies for Aboriginal communities which documented the pros and cons of different interventions, based on selected case studies and provided suggestions for motivating community action. Dopstop is keen to use the book in its work. During one field trip to the region in February this year, I visited farms in the winelands region and spoke with farmers and workers; met local NGOs and was able to share ideas from Australia in a number of presentations, to community workers at local clinics.

in a township and at the Public Health Program at UWC. My next visit in July, is to co-convene a winter school short course in ‘Developing multi-faceted programs for communities living with alcohol’, with the local counterpart, Kirstie Rendall-Mkosi. The course is aimed at a variety of health workers, nurses and community workers. Hopefully there will also be an opportunity to have further input to a ‘sensible drinking’ project run out of a Cape Town hospital, which is attempting to cut down on alcohol-related violence and injuries, and to work more closely with the Dopstop workers on planning their future strategies.

Dr Maggie Brady
Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy, ANU

The Oral History Project at the University of Natal

The Oral History project at the University of Natal was started by Professor Philippe Denes in 1994. The first project was collecting memories/stories relating to the history of the first non-white clerics in Southern Africa, which culminated in an international conference in Pietermaritzburg in 1994. After that followed a project focused on Black Clergy under apartheid in the Natal midlands. This involved interviews with 34 black clerics in that region and led to the production of The Casper and the Cross; and to another international conference entitled Listening to their Voices in June 1999 the proceedings of which were published as Orality, Memory and the Past. At the same time the OHP’s interview holdings were catalogued and the catalogue and interview material handed over to the Alan Paton Centre at the end of 2000.

At present the Oral History project is involved in the collection of memories of Women Leaders of Black Women’s Christian Organisations under Apartheid. In addition another project is the collection of the memories of families affected by HIV/AIDS.

The Oral History Project, in conjunction with a national advisory committee, will host the International Oral History Association (IOAA) conference in Pietermaritzburg in June 2002.

Sir Albert Cook of Uganda and his Clinical Records

It was reading Uganda Memories by Sir Albert Cook in 1952 that inspired me to go to Makerere College as an anatomist in the fledgling Medical School. There I spent thirteen richly rewarding years. Mine were times of tumultuous change as medical education and research flourished in many vigorous ways. On the neighbouring Kampala hill at Mengo was and still is the Church Missionary Society’s Mengo Hospital founded by Albert and Katherine Cook. I frequently visited there as a clinician to contribute in some small way to the pioneer work which had inspired me to go to Uganda.

At Mengo I read Sir Albert’s clear, concise clinical descriptions. Often these had been made under extreme conditions on safari or during war. Some were on tattered scrap paper. Some had descriptions of several (to him) unrecognised diseases. By my time these had received formal description and much intense research which resulted in Makerere Medical School becoming world famous. Notable among these were kwashiorkor, Burkitt’s lymphoma, sickle cell anaemia and Kaposi’s sarcoma. It is interesting that Henry Wellcome, a pharmacist (founder of Burroughs-Wellcome Pharmaceuticals) was an enthusiastic supporter of Cook’s medical work and indeed provided the Mengo Hospital pharmacy.

Sir Albert’s personal papers were given to the Wellcome Institute by his grandson Richard Bax in 1994. The bulk consist of correspondence and a large collection of diaries, photographs and some printed material. The Wellcome Trust in 1994 funded a project to microfilm all the Mengo Hospital records and 25 reels of microfilm were made before the project had to be suspended due to political difficulties. On a return visit to Kampala last year however I found Cook’s precious records, now in Makerere Medical Library, were in great danger of further damage unless properly curated. Many but not all have been microfilmed and are in the Contemporary Medical Archives Centre at the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine in London. It is to be hoped that the work of recording and curating these unique records of 19th century medicine in Uganda may proceed to completion before adverse climatic conditions destroy them.

David Allbrook
Carmel, Western Australia

African Research Institute
La Trobe University

The following seminars were held during first semester

Thomas Spear, Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin and formerly a lecturer in the History Department at La Trobe University, gave a seminar paper on Thursday 8 March on Colonial Rule, the Politics of Neo-Traditionalism, and the Limits of Invention in Tanzania.

Bruce Berman, Professor of Political Studies, Queens University, Kingston, Ontario, gave a paper on Thursday 5 April entitled Representing the Kikuyu: Louis Leakey, Jomo Kenyatta and the Political Uses of Anthropology. Both seminars were well attended and promoted rich and interesting discussions.

A full day symposium on Somalia was held on Saturday 12 May under the auspices of the African Research Institute. The morning sessions were given to The Peace Process in Somalia. Papers included one by Associate Professor David Dorward on the Background History of Somalia, a full and insightful paper by Abdirahman Mohamed Mohumud on The Peace Process in Somalia, and one by Hashim Tewfik Mohamed titled ‘Federatism: a Means for Democratic Reconstitution of the Somali State’.

The afternoon session was concerned with Somali Experience in Australia. Issa Farah introduced the proceedings by talking about the Somali Migration to Australia. This was followed by two papers concerned with Problems Facing Somalis in Australia. Awes Sh. Muheidin Amin spoke on the general problems faced by Somali migrants, focusing particularly on difficulties encountered by young people in adjusting to a different education system and gaps in their own formal schooling. Shahrazad Nur spoke particularly on the difficulties that Somali women face on entering a different culture and the tensions that arise in relation to family and Islamic constraints in a new social environment. The latter two papers gave rise to significant discussion, having covered material that is clearly important in Somali adaptation to Australian life.

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African Studies in Western Australia

The African Studies Centre of Western Australia (ASCWA) began the year on February 16th with a seminar by Professor Abebe Zegeye, a well-known Ethiopian scholar working in South Africa on Crisis and Terror in the Horn of Africa. While in Perth, Professor Zegeye also gave a seminar at Curtin University of Technology, School of Social Sciences, on Depoliticising Ethnicity in South Africa. After his stay in Perth he went on to Adelaide where he also gave further seminars. Professor Zegeye had attended the AFSAAP 2000 Annual Conference in Adelaide, and so was a welcome "returnee."

Dr Elaine Bindell, from the University of Natal, Durban, gave the second seminar on The 7-foot screen: Space, Film and Race in the Apartheid State, on Friday May 18th.

Professor Stephen Muecke, who is Professor of Cultural Studies at the University of Technology, Sydney, gave a Public lecture on Narrative in Cultural Studies research: The Indian Ocean, at Murdoch University on May 9th.

Elaine Bindell gave a special School of Social Sciences seminar at Curtin University of Technology on Debating Educational Films for ‘natives’: South Africa in the 1930s. on May 25th.

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The Australian premiere of the full length film Maangamizi: the Ancient One was held at the Dolphin Theatre University of Western Australia on August 3rd. The co-producer and director of this film, Dr Martin Mhando, is senior lecturer at Murdoch University.

The premiere was hosted by Tanzania Australia Business Council (TABC)

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People, Visitors, Film Premiere

Peter Limb, previously at UWA, is now Africana Bibliographer at the Africana Library, Michigan State University. He is also Coordinator of the African e-Journals Project based at MSU. The university has a vigorous African Studies Centre with 130 affiliated core faculty who work on some aspect of Africa. MSU has long-standing reciprocal relations with many African universities, including those in Senegal, Ethiopia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Nigeria. Peter will represent MSU at the Zimbabwe International Book Fair in Harare in August 2001. He continues to write on Africa and gave a paper on Sol Plaatje to the Canadian Association of African Studies conference in Quebec in May 2001, and in July will deliver papers in Mafikeng, Johannesburg, and Botswana. He sends his best wishes to all AFSAAP people and advises that he will be back in Australia briefly in December. His A-Z guide to African Studies on the Internet is now at http://www.lib.msu.edu/limb/a-z/az.html His contact details are:

Peter Limb
Africana Bibliographer, MSU Libraries,
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824-1048

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The Secretary of AFSAAP Dr Tanya Lyons was the Keynote Speaker at the bi-annual conference of the South African Historical Society, held in July 2001 at the University of the North-West, in Mafikeng, South Africa. The conference theme was "Coca-Cola and Calabashes: Culture and Society in a Globalising World". Dr Lyons address entitled “Africa at the Edge of Globalisation” examined the issues facing Africa in the new millennium. During the conference the theme of Coca-Cola and Calabashes was used to compare the New with the Old South Africa. This was an important time to raise such concerns as it coincided with OAU discussions on the creation of the African Union. Many excellent papers were delivered by South African historians with a dynamic contingent visiting from Botswana. A small but vocal group from Australia – including Professor Jill Roe (History, Macquarie University) and Dr Peter Limb – were warmly welcomed by the conference organisers. One of the main points raised at the conference was the threat to historical studies in South Africa and the need to encourage young scholars to remain interested in South African history. It was suggested that formal links be made between the SAHS and AFSAAP, and a link will be made between the two respective websites.

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AFSAAP Vice President, Dr Liz Dimock has taken up an appointment as a Teaching Fellow in the History Department at Otago University, New Zealand for the second semester 2001. She will teach a third year course on Colonial Africa, in which fifty students are enrolled. She writes that "there is already a nucleus of African studies here, with Gerald Pillay, Elizabeth Isichei and Richard Jackson on the staff" and adds that one of her students hopes to attend the AFSAAP conference in Melbourne in October.

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Elizabeth Anne Reid, one of AFSAAP’s earliest members, has been awarded the AO, officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia, for her services to international relations, particularly through the United Nations Development Programme, to the welfare of women and to HIV/AIDS policy development in both Australia and internationally.

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Readers of the AFSAAP Review and Newsletter who know the richness of the material on Africa that comes from his publishing house will be delighted to learn that James Currey, founder of James Currey Publishers, a Vice President of the Royal African Society and Council Member of the African Studies Association UK, was given a Special Achievement Award at the 43rd annual meeting of the African Studies Association USA in Nashville, Tennessee on 17 November 2000. The award, the first time the association has so honoured a non-academic, was given in recognition of his ‘outstanding service in African studies as a publisher of African studies texts’ for some forty years, first at Oxford University Press, Cape Town, then at Heinemann, and finally with his own imprint. Several generations of African authors supported his nomination for the award, including Chinua Achebe, Ngugi wa Thiongo, Ali Mazrui and Ato Quayson.

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Professor Bruce Derman, Professor of Political Studies, Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada, and a foremost historian on Kenya, was on study leave in Melbourne through the first semester. He was attached to Ormond College, and also spent a good deal of time at La Trobe University. While engaged primarily in writing during his stay in Melbourne he also gave two seminars on some of his current research, one at The African Research Institute (see above) and a second at the Institute of Post Colonial Studies.

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Professor Mbuwelo Mzamane of South Africa was in Australia during the first half of the year as a visiting scholar at the Hawke Institute at the University of South Australia. During the apartheid era Professor Mzamane was a freedom fighter and spent almost 30 years in exile. He became the first post-apartheid Vice-Chancellor at the University of Fort Hare in South Africa in 1994. He was also a professor in the Department of English Studies and Comparative Literature. In the course of his visit to Australia he was a guest speaker at the Adelaide Festival of Ideas (July 13-15, 2001) where he examined the issues of reconciliation. He also gave a fascinating speech on the New South Africa at Flinders University and presented a seminar at the University of South Australia.

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The Association of Third World Studies (ATWS) Kenya Chapter will host an International Conference from 17-19th, September 2001 at Egerton University, Njoro, Kenya on the theme: ‘Africa Beyond Ignorance, Corruption, Conflict, Poverty and HIV/AIDS’. The Conference aims to discuss economic, social, political and ethical issues affecting development in the third world and Africa in general and Kenya in particular; focus research on contemporary issues affecting the developing world; and publish the proceedings of the conference and offer selected papers for publication in the Journal of Third World Studies, Inc. For further information, including concerning accommodation contact: Dishon G. Kweya at Email: kweyad@yahoo.com

The IIIrd Congress of the African Historians Association will be held in Bamako, September 10-14th, 2001. Fr Doulaye Konate, Chairman, Association des Historiens Maliens (ASHIMA), Siege, Rue Mage 428-BP: E 5484, Bamako, Mali, West Africa. Email doulaye@afribone.net.mll

The South African Association of Political Science will hold a conference on the theme The Politics of African Renewal and Global Renewal from 5-7 October 2001. The conference will be held on the University of Natal Westville campus. For further information contact Dr Janis van der Westhuizen, Political Science programme University of Natal, Howard College campus, Durban 4041, South Africa. Email: vndjcrj@nu.ac.za

The 44th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association of the USA (ASAUSA)is November 15-18, 2001, in Houston, Texas. “Africa and the African Diaspora: Past, Present, Future” is the theme. Edward A. Alpers of UCLA is the National Program Chair. For further information contact Loree D. Jones, Executive Director, African Studies Association, Rutgers University, Douglass College, 132 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1400. Email: ldjones@rci.rutgers.edu. OR http://www.africancstudies.org

The 45th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association USA with the theme Africa in the Information and Technology Age will be December 5-8, 2002, at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington DC. Email: ldjones@rci.rutgers.edu

A Film and History Conference, will be held at the University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, Cape Town, South Africa, 6-8 July, 2002.
Organisers: Lesley Marx, Department of English Language and Literature, Richard Mendelsohn, Department of Historical Studies and Vivian Bickford-Smith, Department of Historical Studies.

This conference aims to stimulate research in the field of film and history in Africa by bringing together scholars from within and beyond the continent. For further information contact Richard Mendelsohn:
Email: rmend@beattie.uct.ac.za

The 8th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women, Women’s Worlds 2002, will be hosted by the Department of Women and Gender Studies at Makerere University, the first such department in Africa and will be at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, July 21-26, 2002. The Congress meets every three years, most recently in Norway, but this is the first time it has convened in an African country. Its central theme will be an assessment of progress over the past few decades: “Gendered Worlds, Gains and Challenges.” The goal of the meeting is to promote cross-cultural discussion between academics in many fields and between them and professionals working in organizations concerned with women and gender issues. English is the main language of the conference. Participants may stay in dormitories on the campus, located on an attractive hillside on the edge of Kampala.

Proposals are welcomed for full panels, individual papers, or posters/exhibitions. Please send an abstract, working title, and explanation of the project’s relevance to the conference’s theme to: The Coordinator, Women’s Worlds 2002, Department of Women and Gender Studies, Makerere University PO Box 7062, Kampala, Uganda. The deadline for proposals is June 15, 2001.

For more information, check their website: www.wgs.or.ug or contact Marjorie McIntosh, Department of History, University of Colorado, Boulder, USA.

The Third International Conference on Women in Africa and the African Diaspora (WAAD III) will be held at Antananarivo and Tamatave, MADAGASCAR, October 8-17, 2001. The theme is Facing the New Millennium: Gender in Africa and the African Diaspora—Retrospection and Prospects. CONTACT: Obioma Nnaemeka, Convener, Third WAAD Conference, Women’s Studies Program, Cavanaugh Hall Room 001C, Indiana University, 425 University Boulevard, Indianapolis, IN 46202, USA.
Email: WAAD@iupui.edu

The Academic Council on Problems of African Countries and the Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, will hold the 9th Conference of Africanists in Moscow on the subject of “Africa in the Context of North-South relations,” May 21-23, 2002. For further information contact:

Organising Committee, Institute for African Studies. 103001, 30/1, Spiridonovka Street, Moscow Russia. Email: inter@infr.ru

Call for papers, Conference on: “Narrative, trauma and memory – Working through the SA armed conflicts of the 20th century.”

A multidisciplinary conference on the above-mentioned topic is being organised by the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Cape Town and will be held from 3-5 June 2002. We would welcome contributions from various disciplines, i.e. Psychiatry, Psychology, Literature and SA History. The conference will especially focus on the following wars affecting South African society: The Anglo Boer (South African) War of 1899-1902, the First and Second World Wars, and the “Border Wars” and Liberation Struggle of 1960-1990. Contributions would be welcomed on, for instance, historical narratives told about these conflicts, problems and possibilities of narrative therapy, and literary narratives as a way of confronting trauma and giving meaning to traumatic experiences. The conference. The date is linked to the end of the Anglo Boer War a hundred years earlier on 31 May 1902. The conference will focus on narrative (historical, autobiographical and literary) as a means of working through the traumatic past and of dealing with the present and the future.

Abstracts of papers have to be submitted by 15 December 2001.
Chris van der Merwe (Convenor): Email: cnvdm@beattie.uct.ac.za
THE AFRICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION OF
AUSTRALASIA AND THE PACIFIC

MEMBERSHIP
AFSAAP is open to anyone interested in the study of Africa and the development of African studies. Current rates of membership are:

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The African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific (AFSAAP) which grew out of informal discussions amongst a small group of academics at a meeting of ANZAAS in Melbourne in 1978 was formed later that year at a meeting convened at La Trobe University by Thomas Spear and David Dorward. The intention was to provide a mechanism whereby Africanists could keep in touch with each other and with current Africanist activities in Australia. The name was altered to the African Studies of Australasia and the Pacific in 1985. Membership of the Association was never conceived as narrowly academic and from its inception membership has included members of aid and NGO organisations, government departments, local African communities and others. The Association values its links with the broader community.

Since 1978 the Association has organised an annual conference, published a newsletter that has grown into first the Review and Newsletter and now The Australasian Review of African Studies. It has recently published the Fifth edition of its Directory of Africanists in Australasia and the Pacific.

Visit the Association's new website: www.ssn.flinders.edu.au/Global/afsaap